

Controversy = Logick.  
O R,  
The METHOD to find out  
THE  
T R U T H  
In Debates of  
RELIGION.

The Second Edition, Corrected  
and much enlarged.

2 Col. 8.  
*Videte ne quis vos decipiat.*

At Roan, Anno. MDCLXXIV.

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## ERRATA.

**P**Age 25. line 12. read in our, p. 39. l. 25.  
r. *the*ir, p. 40. l. 18. r. *cases*, p. 41 l. 7.  
r. common have little effect, & l. 26.  
goods, p. 43. l. 5. r. of under, & l. 26. by the  
p. 46. l. 5. *drugs* p. 55. l. 9. & *shall* conclude.  
p. 56. l. 10. *he* will, p. 64. l. 24. r. *wasted*.  
p. 65. l. 14. *Law*, p. 66. l. 24. *there is* all. p. 67.  
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of, p. 69. l. 11. i. and *Mission*, p. 54. l. 22. *Ammon-*  
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233. l. 20. *say*.

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*Controversy - Logick :*  
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O R,  
The Method to find out the  
T R U T H  
In Debates of  
R E L I G I O N.

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*Introduction.*

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**M**R. John Biddle, *one (as he is described to me) of the most learned and rational among the Enemies of the Roman Church, wrote not long since, a book, declaring what opinion he had, out of Scripture, framed to himself concerning*

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## Introduction.

cerning the Blessed Trinity, nor from Scripture alone, but the Fathers of the first three Centuries; nimbly skipping over, according to the usual activity of a Protestant Doctor, above a thousand years at a leap.

By this way of proceeding he pretends, that neither the Calvinist, nor any other who stick to pure Scripture, may not the Protestant himself, who extends Authority to the Fathers of the first three hundred years and no farther, have any just law, or even the least colour of right to censure him. Since he maintains all the Principles of every sort, and offers out of them, by disputation, to justify whatever he has written: Excepting which two grounds, (of Scripture, and the writings of those Primitive Fathers, both privately interpreted), there is nothing but wilfulness to cause any kind of Protestant, either firmly to believe any conclusion of faith, or rationally censure any contrary opinion. But notwithstanding his so conformable plea, and that generally allowed position of Liberty of Prophecyng, (the basis of all  
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who refuse the judgment of a speaking Church) we see this man detain'd Prisoner by publick Authority, and his book burnt by the hand of the Hang-man.

This bred in me, as I suppose it did in others, the curiosity to have spoken with him: which not being attainable by my small procurements, I contented that desire with the sight of his Book. Nor must I deny him this commendation, that, admitting the Principle of every ones chusing Religion by Scripture, grammatically interpreted, (as is the manner of all that recede from the Authority of Tradition); he proceeds very consequently: Neither do I imagin any of his Persecutors can give a satisfactory answer to what he has written: which is more confirm'd in me, since I understood some had attempted to confute him, others had actually publisht their books against him; but the success of these latter being not found correspondent to expectation, the former thought it wisdom to suppress their endeavours. This made the book esteem'd a srewd and dangerous piece, by those,

who, though they have no rule to know what in Religion is solid, what not, yet, by the force of Custom, and consent of the greatest part of the Christian name, are detain'd from renouncing the Godhead of the whole Trinity; as believing it the main foundation (for a material point) of Christian Faith, and that which has brought forth, for so many ages, those noble and heroick actions, wherewith the Christian world is enrich'd above the rude and neglected times of Paganism.

This consideration, or rather experiment, as it convinced clearly that the disputation between all such as adhere to sole Scripture, are for the most part purely vain and fruitless, (for witty men will never offer to maintain by Scripture what is palpably and unglossably against it); so it made me reflect that the disputations we Catholicks use against Protestants are seldom, and only by accident, profitable; and at last my thoughts, doubling and twisting themselves one with another, spun out this ensuing Treatise.

¶ Nor

Nor must I permit my self to conclude this Preamble, without reflecting on Mr. Biddle's appeal to the Fathers of the first three Ages : not because it is his, but because it is common to him and the Protestants, and even to the Learnedest Calvinists ; as may be seen by the works of Chamier, Daille, &c. though to my thinking a most ridiculous and unreasonable proposition : For, I would willingly know how it can fall into the brain of any indifferently discourse, to doubt whether the fourth age knew not what the Fathers of the former ages held, better when we can out of their works. Then, more of their writings were extant ; none or few cavils, which were true, which supposititious, the style, the phrase, the circumstances, the practices of that time better understood ; and, which is chief of all, Witnesses yet living, who either themselves were Contemporaries to them, or, at least, knew others that had familiarly conversed with them ; so that, being thoroughly acquainted with the Opinions of the very Authors, they could not

doubt of the interpretation of such hard passages as by over-sight, (natural even to the most diligent and watchful Writers) must sometimes escape from their Pens. These were the advantages of the fourth Age over the present : if then we can ask the fourth Age what these Fathers held, and have their Answers assuredly, there can be no comparison betwixt that evidence, and what we can guess at by those scraps and remnants of dark speeches which in many cases must be the subject of our enquiry, if we examine their Books.

And, for a most pregnant instance of this truth, I need go no further then the man we speak of, Mr. Biddle. Read his testimonies, they will seem to you the Contexture of the Books whence they were collected ; so large in some places, so continuedly page after page (whereas generally our Protestant Citations are of a line or two spoken by the by, while the Authors discourse concern'd another business) : yet nothing more manifest then that these could not be the Fathers opinions ; the Council of Nice called the  
Great,

Great, that is, the whole Christian world with open mouth, and one consent condemning the Arrians of novelty, and St. Athanasius so often upbraiding to their faces, ~~that~~ their Progenitors were only Caiphas and Artemas, and such like, and that their Clergy were fain to learn how to profess their Faith and speak; a certain token they had formerly been taught the contrary. The like, in effect, is in all other Controversies betwixt the Protestants and us: For, if the fourth Age in any point testifie the Doctrine they hold to be descended from their Fore-fathers, or in possession of quiet belief in the Church, and that the Opinion they dispute against is a novelty; by this very fact they declare the Faith of the precedent Age more efficaciously, then any testimonies we can draw out of those primitive works are able to convince: And therefore, if we know once what the fourth Age believ'd, we immediately may be satisfied what our selves ought to believe, if we desire to be conformable to the three former.

Thus thou seest (Rational Reader) the motives that have induced me to offer thee my slender endeavours, as a rbrid to lead thee out of the ambiguities and labyrinths of Religion; wherein our Country at this present is so unhappily perplext. The effect of it is, that disputes at large, as they are commonly mannaged, are needless, useless, dangerous: Needless, because there are other means easie for those who are otherwise employ'd, and need believing; and clear, for such as will bestow the pains and time requisite to apply them: Useless, since neither the Overcomer gains his Cause, nor the Weaker loses it; this only being compared, what these two Antagonists did, or, at most, could speak, which is little or nothing to the cause it self; besides, such a running discourse may fill the heads of the Auditors, but hardly clear them, there wanting time, and rest, and quiet, necessary to make a mature and solid judgment: Dangerous, because in such encounters, wit, and tongue, and chance, bear a great stroak, and often break the bitter cause;



cause; and the weaker sort (apt to judge by the event) take ill impressions and scandal at the indiscretion or misfortune of an over-set Disputant. In a word, the intent of this short Discourse is to shew that quiet and solitude, where our brain is serene and spirits calm, are far more conducive to the discernment of truth, especially in Religion, then publick disputes; where, too often, we do nothing but wrangle & provoke one another into mutual animosities. He that practises it, shall find the fruit, which I wish to all who stand in need of it.

As for Mr. Biddle's Book, if such of his *Adversaries* as are separated from the Catholick Church can, by their Principles, confute it; that is, not only shew the truth to be more plainly in Scripture then his Errours, but so evident that the explications producible for his party are not tolerable, and by consequence clearly to be condemn'd out of the force of pure Scripture; the Catholick Writers need not engage against him. But, if I am not deceiv'd, whoever undertakes it, meerly upon Protestant

testant grounds, will find a very difficult task; the nature of the question requiring a seeming contradiction in the expression, and so the point consisting in this, which part of the seeming contradictory passages is to be explicated by the other: Now, how such a Controversy is decidable by the words of Scripture, I cannot well apprehend. If then it shall happen that those Adversaries prove too weak, and the inefficaciousness of the bare Text of the Bible, in this so principal a Point, become evident; it may be necessary to use Catholick arguments for the defence of Christian truth; to which these Papers may, at least in some degree, prepare thee.

T. W.

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First

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First Reflexion.*What Religion is.*

**T**O understand the Nature of disputation in *Religion*, we must first know what *Religion* it self is. We do not here take it in the sense of School-Divines, for a special vertue by which we perform the honours due to Almighty God, to the blessed Saints his Friends, and whatever holy things belong to Him and His: But Religion, on our present Treaty, signifies a Skill, or Art, or Doctrine whereby to gain eternal Bliss.

To comprehend this the better, we must remember it has always been an undoubted Truth among the Faithful, both under the Law of *Nature* and *Moses*, as also far more evidently under the *Gospel*, that Man has two

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Lives

Lives; one in this, Mortality and Corruption, where we are continually subject to change and necessity: Another which we expect hereafter, to continue in unspeakable happiness for ever, if we behave our selves uprightly here; or in endless torments, if we neglect our duties in this world. Now this future life being everlasting, and the consequences of it both for good and bad so highly exalted above the contents and crosses of the present, render the Art of attaining it, without comparison, more necessary and esteemable than any other whatsoever; beyond the craft of gaining Wealth, in which the Eastern and Arabian Wizards place their skill beyond the out-witting and over-powering glory of politique Statesmen, whose felicity is to ensnare the World into the necessity of a wilful bondage to their unlimited ambitions; beyond the contentment of these, who, nuzzling themselves in their own Nest, and entertaining their days with home-bred and easily compassed delights, laugh at the vain and restless

restless Negotiations of such as tur-  
moil in the waves of Fortune; a skill,  
in fine, of unparallel'd both excellence  
and necessity, infinitely outweighing all  
other employments and designs, and  
consequently deserving to be respect-  
ed and sought after with our whole  
force and utmost endeavours.

Besides, Philosophers offer us ano-  
ther consideration not to be omitted.  
They divide mans actions into two  
sorts; one they seem to say are the  
actions of Man, as Man; the other  
proceed from him as endowed with  
some peculiar quality, though that  
very quality be proper only to hu-  
mane nature: As no Creature, but  
Man can be a Smith, a Musitian, a  
Philosopher, yet no peculiar actions  
of these (considered in themselves)  
are the actions of Man, as he is such;  
but if any action be done prudently,  
valiantly, justly, or temperately, that  
they say proceeds from him as man.  
But truly, in my judgment, this is  
not properly a division of actions, as  
actions, but of the degrees or quali-  
ties of the same actions. A Smith, or

Pilot cannot perform their Trades, but their exercise must be either in convenient measure and circumstances, or besides them; and accordingly, is either prudent or imprudent, just or unjust, &c. So that to be vertuous or vicious is a common quality to all sorts of actions, not a special kind of action; and yet is the action said to proceed from Man as Man, as far as it is vertuous or vicious. Neither is there any action so proper to Vertue and Vice, as not to include some other nature in it self: Fortitude requires some action or passion to govern, and wherein to exercise courage: Temperance has pleasures to moderate, as in Meat and Drink, which belong to another faculty; the object of Justice is civil actions, which are determin'd by Laws & Customs; Prudence is a common Eye over all.

Yet possibly, though the actions be the same, the Sciences may be divers; as, the skill of Musick and Logick is very different from the science that teacheth to use them in time and place

place with moderation ; and the Philosophers assign arts to the former, and the science of Morals to the latter, whence 'tis apparent, what we call in Christian language *Religion*, is correspondent to that the Heathens call'd *Moral Philosophy* : Correspondent, I say, or rather proportionable with the imparity of Pagan darkness to the light of Truth; delivered us by Almighty God. For, as the next world was wholly obscure and unknown to those old Philosophers, so consequently they must needs be ignorant of the true end of humane life and action; whence it follows, that all their skill and study could not bring them to the least action perfect in the way of nature; that being impossible to be perfect in respect of nature, which missed of the end of nature, nay, did not so much as aim at it, and therefore surely could never reach to the proportion of circumstances due to that end. This conclusion I draw from these Philosophers, that *Religion* is, in Proportion to Christian life, what they

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they esteemed *moral Philosophy* in order to a good or happy life.

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## Second Reflexion.

*How Religion is Naturally to be bred in Man-kind.*

FROM these premises we clearly infer, if Mans Nature were in its due perfection, *Religion* would be as well known, and with as much security assented to, as are now the common principles of Nature and natural living; for since, (according to the general Maxime of Philosophers,) no one action can be exercis'd by Man as Man, but it must be either Vertuous or Vicious; nor ought any action to be Vicious, but all good in the perfection of Nature: He ought to have in every passage of his life a Rule to square and regulate his proceeding; for 'tis manifest,



nifest, if he be not very secure and observant of this Discipline, he must unavoidably fail and swerve from Vertue and Nature, nor can be said to be perfect in the course of Nature, or possess that state which is conformable to his Nature; wherefore since Religion is necessary to raise Nature, to enjoy the perfection of Man-kind; he ought to have the principles of Religion evident to him as the principles of Nature.

No less is seen out of the former part of our discourse; for if Religion be the skill of obtaining Beatitude, and this the end of our birth and being in the world, it follows, our very life here cannot be so directed as it ought, but by the science and rule of Religion; and because the right direction to eternal happiness is of greater value than our continuation in this world, the science of attaining Heaven ought to be more clear to us, than the art of guiding our selves in other affairs; wherefore, since we find Religion is not now so evident and certain to us, as the principles of

our natural and civil life, we may easily gather we are not in the true temper which humane nature requires. Whence we may argue, if that happy state in which our first Parents were Created, had continued till their multiplication might have fill'd the earth, the knowledge of God, and other principles of arriving at celestial felicity would have been as natural to them, as providing Meat, & Cloaths, and Houses are now to us; and both derived with the same connaturalness from Parents, and embraced with the like, or greater heat of affection by the Children; and that the unfortunate Apple was the cause 'tis not so now, as well as of all other disorders in Man-kind; whereof this is not the least, nay perhaps the source of most of the rest, as they who look wisely into it will easily discern.

The due way therefore to attain the knowledg of Religion, is by Nature; such Nature I speak of, as we see works in Children, when they learn their first language, which as it depends on their Mothers and Nurses  
deli-

delivery to them, so is it not perform'd without the endeavours of the little souls labouring to express their minds; and Nature has in it such principles, that neither one nor other party can give over their pains till they have brought the effect to pass. After the same manner in that happy state of Innocence, Children should have been without particular reflexion, or straining their thoughts, train'd up as perfectly in godliness as in natural qualities.

And this is clearly deducible out of an Axiome, Philosophers use in the beginning of Logick, where they teach that Logick ought to be first learnt as being an instrument or method to obtain other sciences, and therefore to be posselt before you go about to endeavour the gaining of them. So Religion being the Rule of governing our lives well, and as we ought, when once we are come to the use of reason; it self is certainly to be planted in us, before we arrive at the age of choyce and discretion. Again, since no action ought to be ex-

empt from the direction of Religion, not even the very first, it necessarily follows that Religion should take possession of our hearts even before reason.

Neither speak I this as a thing that only should have been in the state of Paradise, but as what is connatural to us here, and practised by many good Mothers, who teach their Children their Prayers, and imprint in their tender minds a deep conceit of Heaven and God, before they are capable to judge of any temporal affairs: From all which we plainly infer, that 'tis the true nature of Religion to be propagated in Man-kind by pure discipline and delivery from Father to Son, and to be embraced in the meer Vertue of such a reception through the natural credulity of Children to their Parents and Teachers; though I intend not hereby to exclude, but as riper years come on, they ought to improve themselves, and gain stronger grounds to confirm what they first accepted by a simple inclination to believe their Tutors.

But

But here peradventure will be expected a reason, (since we mean not in this discourse by the term *Religion*, the virtue so named, but the skill of attaining eternal Bliss,) why this should be call'd *Religion*. To which the answer is not difficult, for the end we aim at in this life, belonging to the next, of which even the Learned know so little, much less the ordinary sort of Christians, whose capacities are low, and their greatest endeavours bestow'd in temporal employments: it was requisite for our Nature that this science should be delivered us from God himself; and coming from Him, the most conformable way was that it should be done by *Command*, as being both more fit for his greatness, & for our infirmity, since it argues him our *Sovereign Lord*, and takes away all possibility of dispute in us. Thus we see the art of obtaining happiness, was now become a matter also of obedience to Almighty God.

Besides, the object of Beatitude being the Divine Essence, the way to obtain it must be an ardent affection

to God, which proceeding from an high esteem, and from such esteem, duties and acknowledgments of his greatness whom we honour, it follows that the chief, if not the whole skill of acquiring bliss must consist in framing due acknowledgments and affections towards the God-head; and so the *Art* which before we distinguished from the *Virtue* of Religion, as preceding and directing it, is now found coincident and convertible with it; and this word *Religion*, which seem'd equivocally spoken of the two, and in truth is (the notions being quite different) yet because the things executed by both are the same, the name also is justly and fitly derived from one to the other, nay, indeed so necessarily, that, without good consp[ec]tion, we cannot discern wherein they differ.

Third

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## Third Reflexion.

*That the Religion, without which there is no Salvation, is but one.* Y

**I**T cannot be doubted, out of what we have hitherto discoursed, that, according to the quality of all other Arts and Sciences, and the custome and rule of Nature in all her other proceedings, the way also of conquering the high walls of Heaven by our violent affections, is but one: For whatsoever cause of it we consider, we shall find it one, and driving to Unity. If we look upon God, who is One, and the last End of Religion; His being one, argues, that the way to enjoy him, is but one: He likewise being the sole Master of Religion, we cannot expect as from his inclination divers præscriptions and rules.

rules to bring the same imperfect Creature to the same perfection. If we consider Him to be rational, and to do nothing wilfully, presently it affords us light to see, that he doth not out of a spontaneous choyce fall upon this course with one Man, and another with others, meerly by fancy; but that there is a reason for all varieties; and that such reason hath its ground from the Creature, the Unity and Simplicity of God not permitting the variety to have its off-spring purely from him.

Let us add to this, that the way of strong reason ( other then which we cannot look for in the fountain of all reason ) is demonstration, and that it goeth by immediate steps and links, the one innexed in the other, and rivetted by the community of their Essences, entangling one definition with another : Whence it is evident, a perfect demonstration for one conclusion can be but one, as being nothing but the definition disguised, as *Aristotle* declares in his books of *Demonstration*. So that if the question  
be



be of bringing Man to the same Beatitude, the high and perfect way, only proper to God can be but one.

Let us descend from God to his prime Minister; so different by his humane Nature from God, that by the conjunction with his Divine, his ways are made unseparable from those of the Deity it self. He being sent to teach us the way to happiness, what did he do? He chose twelve Apostles, those he taught in common and publick, and before all the world: These so instructed, He sent dispersed into all Countries to sow in all Nations what themselves had learnt. Can we believe that every one had his distinct Lesson to Preach in several quarters of the World? If they had not, then they must needs have planted but one, and one must be Religion. This we see confirmed by effect beyond all power of contradiction. For when upon occasion of dissensions these successors met (as in the great Council of Nice) they found themselves all of one Faith, the Errours newly sprung, containing themselves with

within the Countrys of their Nativity or small growth: And so it continues to this very day amongst those who keep the Ancient rule of Faith; and by so doing, are solely the true maintainers of Christs Law.

Let us now turn our discourse to the inferiour Instruments of God, and see that Nature can come but one way to one effect; for Nature is but the chain of causes descending from the Throne of the Almighty, and ending in the particular effect, we consider to be done by Nature. Now in all this connexion we ~~can not~~ find the least atome, but if it had been missed; the defect of it had made a defect in the subsequent cause that mediate between it and the effect, and so in the very effect it self, which from other immediate causes must have been another. Nor is it less evident, that as if any particular cause fail the effect is altered in particular; so if we take an universal effect, such an one as is *all Man kind to come to blifs*, that also will fail, if any of the causes fail which are ordained for the compassing that.

that Universal effect. Clear then it is, that there can be but *one way* ordered in the providence of God for the effecting this; and the means being *Religion*, that there is but one *Religion*. Yet because in morals things spoken in common, there is the effect, let us advance a particular instance, and ask, what is that which is to be done in this World, that we may obtain bliss in the next? And the Answer is ready, *We must love God a'ove all things, with our whole heart and endeavours*, as we know the Præcept is given, of which we cannot doubt whether it be natural or positive, since it is general to all Laws.

This being so, let us see what this is, and how to be effected, and presently we find it being a love must come from the motives, and so effected by our being taught and pushed on; that is, by the perfection both of our understandings, and our wills and affections; since then, we see the same good, if rightly proposed, affects all sorts of men; we see plainly the same things, whether speculative,

lative or practical ought to be taught to all men, to bring them to this love of God; which is plainly, that one and the same Religion must be Preached in the whole world.

Were it my task to dilate my self in particulars, I should hope to make it evident, that not the least point of Catholick Faith, delivered in that so much-defamed by our Adversaries Counsel of *Trent*, can be omitted without a main blur in our direction towards Heaven. It would be evident, that man being composed of body and soul, must have assistance and helps conformable to both those great parts, that being composed of a spiritual will and affections, Motives are to be proposed, which can take hold of both these parts, and by them draw us to Heaven; our soul being restless and not capable of having no desires, must as well be retired from prejudicial attractives, as inured to wholesome ones.

Out of these common maxims, the descent would not be hard to shew the necessity of those two great motives

tives of love; the one, that God having but one only Son, delivered him up for us to such horrid torments as we read of in the Gospel; and consequently understanding the *Trinity*, the immaculate Conception in a Virgin, and all other points necessarily springing from this source. The other how he feeds us with his Body and Blood, whereby to prepare us to the immortality fitting for us. It would not be hard to deduce the necessity of a Sacrifice, and of the seven initiations to these seven main Virtues and parts of Christian life, which we call *Sacraments*; withal, the retinue of necessary truths to their perfect understanding; likewise the propositions of eternal glory on the one side, and unsufferable Eternity in torment on the other; as also the beginning and ending of the World, and that dreadful day which in fire shall separate the merits of the divers states of Man-kind, and the frightful preparation to it, is the shattering of the world about our Ears; which are the main principles of Christianity:

But

But this requires a large treatise, let it at present suffice; that it is evident, if God intend to direct us wisely and conformably to our nature towards the end he Created us for, (which he must necessarily do under forfeiture of his infinite Wisdom and Goodness, should he make Nature and us in it to bring us to our eternal well-being, and not provide the means for it) his Commands can be no other than of those things, which by their essences integrate the most streight and direct way; wherein, did we penetrate the cause of things, we should of our own inclinations, and by the knowledge of moral Philosophy, both march our selves, and guide others.

This being concluded, that Religion is but one only; it follows, if we hit on the right, and live accordingly, we are for ever happy; if we miss of it, eternally miserable, whether the fault of missing be ours or no, wherein I desire to be well understood, for I intend not to suppose such missing can happen without our fault,

fault, which is another disputation, but only to establish this universal Proposition, That *who has not the true Religion, must needs miscarry in attaining felicity.*

By this we see on what a dangerous shelf they run, who seek for refuge of their naufragated Consciences on these shallow & deceitful pretences, God they say, is good and merciful, He enjoyns us not impossibilities, but is content if we do our endeavours to fulfil his Precepts; and I for my part am very ready to obey as far as I know, nay I study and pray to find out his Will, and cannot; therefore surely I need not trouble my self, but cast away care and trust to the mercy of so infinite a Goodness: For if what we have hitherto laboured to evince, be true, that Gods commands are not *voluntary*, but of actions naturally breeding the effect for which they are given; labour what you will, if you do not that which is commanded, that is, if you take not the true way of going to Heaven, walk as fast as you will, you shall never come there. The

The prescriptions of the Doctor are Commands, but if the Apothecary (though he endeavour never so much) do not really mingle the right drags, and temper them according to the *Receipt*, the Physick will never prove healthful to the Patient. The Husband-mans prescriptions to his hinds are commands, yet if his Servant, though he work by his greatest wits, sow Pease instead of Wheat, the crop will not come up fit for his Masters Table. So in all other Trades and Arts 'tis not enough we do our best, but the very things must be really perform'd, if we intend the effects should really follow; they therefore, who sit down and content themselves with this cold comfort, that *God is merciful*, are plainly convinced that they make less account of that most important business *their Salvation*, then of those meaner profits which are gain'd by vulgar Arts and worldly employments.

These two then stand well together, that the same thing may be a command and a natural action intrinsically



sically conducing towards the end, for which 'tis commanded, may regularly 'tis so, no command being otherwise but where there is some fault either in the Commander, or the Subject. The Generals commands are all ordered to Safety and Victory, the States-mans to Peace and Plenty, the Bishops to Vertue and Piety; yet are they all Commands, and from thence have a power of forcing obedience, because of themselves they are, or at least ought to be supposed necessary for the common good, in respect of which, one man subjects himself to another.

Whence the weakness of this excuse grows still more evident; for if this be incident to all good commands, that they enjoyn actions conformable to the end for which they are given; and that the command be made for the action, as the action for the end; ) which must be in the commands of Religion, whereby God orders us to eternal life, his Commands being the Idea to all others, and this matter the principal whereon he  
exer-

exercises that power) it clearly follows, whither the precept be possible or impossible, known or unknown; if it be not fulfill'd, the action is not perform'd, without which the end can never be obtain'd, and so the Party remains undone; not because he disobey'd, but because he did not the action requisite to Salvation; which if he had done without command, it would have saved him; and in vertue of which, the obedience to the command saves all whom it doth save, and none are saved without it.

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**Fourth**

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## Fourth Reflexion.

*That Religion is certain, and the  
means to attain it;*

**T**He case standing so, that either we must do what God has commanded in this World, or suffer what he has threatned in the next, without any excuse for Ignorance, I need not further urge to any, sensible of their souls interest, that the knowledg of this Law of God ought to be certain and undoubted, both in it self, & to us; and every one, according to his particular circumstances ought to have a constant and immutable assurance, that it is indeed Gods Law, by which he governs his life: Nor has our Blessed SAVIOUR left his Church unprovided of means to secure us of this truth, every one suitably to his capacity, if the execution be conformable to the principles.

The former branch of this Assertion is so clear, that time were spent in vain to declare it; for since the end of our faith and supernatural knowledge is our performing in fact, and not only in will, the Commandments of God under pain of losing Heaven, and incurring everlasting Damnation, if what is enjoyn'd be not done in effect: Since also 'tis impossible they who are uncertain whether they be in the right, and have only a changeable opinion concerning the Law of God, should constantly and firmly in all their works observe it, nothing can be clearer than that such are altogether unfit for Christian life, a life so full of difficulties, both from our own corrupt nature within us, and innumerable tentations round about us; they are as one that holds the Plough, and is still looking back; their hope must needs be weak, and their charity unstable, because their faith is wavering: In their practise they must needs be carryed forwards and backwards with every wind of Opinion, and never able to steer any steady course

course towards Heaven; especially the rule of good life being of that nature to comprehend all our actions, highest and-lowest, first and last, and whatever is contain'd between those extreams.

For the other part, that God has furnisht his Church with means for all sorts of people to come to this degree of *certainty*, every one according to his growth, is easily perswaded to all, who have but reverence enough towards Him, to think he does not his works by halves, nor leaves man-kind, for whom he made the World destitute in the chief point; for which, as sole end, he created man himself eternal happiness; and since our nature is framed in its most excellent part to require evidence, and 'tis so laudable in Geometry, Astronomy, Physicks, Metaphysicks, and what-ever case of importance not to be satisfied, nor give our assent without *certainty*, at which we ought to aym with all our strength, and that our understanding were truly abused, should it be forced to ac-

cept what it is not assured of (our Soul being made to see, and its essence being a power of seeing) how can any rational discourser suspect that God has fail'd in so principal a part? But to satisfy even the hard of belief, let us look into particulars, and we shall find two sorts of persons in respect of knowledg: Some by themselves are capable to understand, others live upon trust: Of this last kind are these we call *Schollers*, who at first rely on their Masters till themselves grow up to the ripeness of knowing, and perhaps afterwards to the perfection of teaching others; as also much more those who arrive not so far as even to be *Schollers*, which in some respect or other are the greatest part of Man-kind: The Physician trusts the Pilot in Navigation, and the Souldiers in warfare; the Gentleman trusts his Husbandman for his Corn, and the Lawyer for his Sutes, and even Kings themselves trust the Baker for their Bread, and the Brewer for their Drink, and every one must trust every one in their several Arts and Professions.

Now

Now in Religion God has given us an advantage not to be hoped for in any of the trades or sciences necessary to our temporal life; he has provided us not some one Man or Assembly of a dozen or twenty (a numerous consult in other affairs) but a whole world to advise with, and that at one meeting. Consider how great the Church is that holds communion with the See of Rome, all That at once is your warrant; you cannot presume they will tell you a lye, since they speak to you not in words, but in their lives, and so must be deceived themselves, else they cannot cozen you; there you have a fidelity pledged to you beyond the certainty Euclid, or Archimedes can afford, it being more impossible so great a part of Man-kind should live in a continual Hipocrisie, and damnable Conspiracy to ruine their own Posterity; then the surest consequences of Geometry it self to be false.

If you seek Learning, that Church is full of persons eminent in all kinds of Sciences which any other can pre-

tend to: Ask but the Book-sellers shops and you shall meet with a hundred Catholick Authors for one, of any other Communion; thousands continually studying in Colledges and Religious Houses; whose perpetual search may justly challenge a probability of finding the truth; outward piety and means of preserving and encreasing knowledg beyond all other Sects, so that if we may judg upon signes and prudential motives, there is no comparison between any other society of men and that Church; 'tis therefore beyond peradventure to what Authority any discreet and considerate person (who cannot, or will not take the pains to look himself into particular points) ought and must adhere under penalty of forfeiting his judgment; he must needs be rashly careless, and indeed little less than mad, if in way of modern Authority he follow any other, or so much as doubt there can be any other comparable to this, if he be never so little conversant in the learning of the world.

As



As for those, who of themselves are able and curious to look into the veins wherein the roots of Religion run, let them but reflect on the change made in the World since Christianity began to flourish, that is, since *Constantines* time, that is, since the first three hundred years after Christ; and he that demonstratively concludes that, because four or five thousand years of Nature could in no proportion produce those great effects, which we see since in a far shorter space sprung up in such abundance; that surely the finger of God is in this time; and that Protestants, by rejecting it as superstitious and Papistical, plainly confess all the great and glorious effects of Christian Religion are proper only to *Papists*; and this being the whole flourishing time of the Christian Church, their disclaiming those Ages is to any impartial understanding in effect the very renouncing Christianity it self.

Now, if he, who pretends to knowledge, be capable of managing humane Nature, and penetrate so far as to see

how a freedom of heart from the pleasures and cares of this World, is that which produces all good to man, both in temporal and spiritual considerations; and that this freedom cannot be introduced without a settled assurance of the felicity of the next world; nor that firm perswasion, otherwise than by Faith, and the course our *SAVIOR* took for it, will not only cease to admire the World, though fraught with arts in the first two thousand years, should deserve the just revenge of an Universal Deluge; but will clearly discern that as in the latter two thousand before *Christ*, it advanced not at all, so had it endured four hundred thousand more, it would never have made any considerable improvement; the love of worldly things exalting arts and civility to a certain pitch, and then by their encrease to immoderation, reducing all back again to barbarism; or at best floating Man-kind in a certain compass too and fro, and never permitting it to grow into any height of perfection.

*Fifth,*

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Fifth Reflexion.

*How Christian Religion has been  
propagated and conserv'd.*

BY consequence of discourse we are at last driven into this consideration by what means we may find the true *Religion*, which is dividable into two cases; one at the first publication, the other now in the circumstances wherein we live: For the former, we have both our *Saviours* express command that it ought to be by Preaching, and the universal sense of all Christians that it was so perform'd; so as no question can be how Religion was at first sown in the hearts of Man-kind. The Apostles had by Gods special gift the knowledg of all Languages, by which they were enabled to speak to all Nations; and so 'tis generally understood they did, and that by word of mouth they pro-

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pagated the Faith they had learnt from *Jesus Christ* throughout the World. But that they carried any Books, or set the Nations they Preacht to on learning Languages, in which the Scripture was written, no mention is any where made; there being neither probability, nor indeed possibility of the fact, since we know many Nations, who became Christian, had neither writing nor reading for divers Ages after; thus we see the general propagation of Christianity was by vocal Preaching, and oral tradition from Father to Son of the Doctrine first planted among them by the Apostles. Nor can there be imagined, supposing the People unlearned, any other ordinary way of conveighing this necessary discipline to Posterity.

As little doubt is there that the method of the original Institution was in a manner *Ideal* to the following continuation, which seems but a kind of repetition of the beginning; and so we might justly conclude the Conservation of Religion ought to be also  
by,

by Oral delivery; but looking into the nature of the thing to be done, we find it can be no otherways effected. For what is it we aime at, but that the People should be taught the knowledg of going to Heaven? Let us then examine what signifies the word *People*, and the first notion is, that it comprehends Men, Women, and Children; now the property of these last is to believe what's told them without doubting whether it be true or no, or so much as thinking to exercise any judgment about the thing proposed. Women, for a great part of them, participate much of the same quality, and are generally govern'd by their Husbands, esteeming them, if endued with any moderate degree of worth, the most compleat and best of men. As for men, the far more numerous Portion of them are employed to seek their livings, and want either leisure, capacity, or inclination for study and learning; so that clearly Tradition is the proper means to establish Faith in the *People*, they being obliged to relye on Authority for their

their knowledg of what is true, what erroneous in Religion by that ancient and well-known Maxim, *He that is not of the Art must trust to those whose particular skill it is.*

But if once we come to *Authority*, it must be of the *Catholick Romish Church*, which only can speak *Authoritatively*; she only professing to speak from the mouth of Christ and his Apostles; she only having received the sense and meaning of their Doctrine delivered to her, because she only has continued ever since their times; all the rest having nothing but dead Words and the killing Letter, and pretending no more for the sense, than their own discourse or imagination.

Let us next consider what the knowledg of Heaven is, and our first remark will tell us, 'tis such as God himself saw necessary to take mans flesh upon him to teach us, so transcendent and sublime beyond what our eyes had seen, or our ears heard, or our fancies ever conceived, that a less Authority than Gods essential Verity was

was not enough to raise our belief to such incomprehensible Mysteries. And can we imagine that the All-wise God should leave the discussion of ambiguous words, in which such high unconceivable mysteries are hidden to the fantastical changeableness of humane apprehensions? Who does not know that Mans understanding will still incline the ballance towards what he is wont to see, and hear, and apprehend, which is directly contrary to the intent of our *Saviours* coming; a truth whereof we have but too frequent experience, whilst we daily meet with some laughing at the *real Presence*, some at the *Incarnation*, some at the *blissful Trinity*; every one as his fancy carries him, or the Company with whom he converses debauches him: But if the scanning of ambiguous words be once set aside, nothing remains for the settling of Christian Religion but *Tradition*; Tradition therefore is the only means to establish Religion in the Peoples hearts.

Besides all this, the particular quality of these Rules, which are our guides.

guides to Heaven, secures our Conclusion ; for since they are to comprehend all our actions, and so to be before the first, while as yet we have no judgment ; nay they ought to master our very judgment, it being one of our actions ; how can we suppose Religion is to be studied and learnt like a Science, whilst it ought not only to be had when we begin our study, but our study it self to be regulated by it ?

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## Sixth Reflexion.

*That Scripture duely read , will bring a Man to the truth of Religion.*

**T**HIS being on all sides agreed, that the *Scriptures* were written by the same Spirit that guided the Apostles in their Preaching , it cannot be doubted but the Doctrine of their writings is conformable to that of their Sermons ; with this difference that :



that their meaning in what they Preacht, being often inculcated, and plainly with variety of expressions, according to the particular occasion, delivered, could not possibly admit of any dispute; whereas nothing more clear than that their sense in what they writ is many times obscure, which sufficiently proves that the Scriptures are to be interpreted by the Law written in the hearts of that Church, which has always adhered to the *Doctrine received*, though I have no scruple, but of themselves they may lead any one to the true Religion that reads them as he ought.

Wherein I shall here offer him these few directions. First, that he open his Bible with a sincere mind to submit his judgment to it, and not strain to draw it to his own Opinion. Secondly, That he be a person of a sound understanding, not carryed away with every light appearance. Thirdly, That he accept of no Commenter, nor Interpreter cunninger than himself; nor relye on any thing for the mind of the Scriptures, but  
what

what themselves afford him. Fourthly, That he read them long and attentively. Lastly: That what he understands out of them, he endeavour to put in practise, and govern his life accordingly; for practise strangely enlightens any Book which gives rules in what-ever operation. These directions observ'd, I cannot doubt, but who takes Scripture for his guide will not fail in the end to be led into the *Catholick Church*; since both the reason before delivered, and experience and the instances of particular Doctrines, all manifestly declare this effect must infallibly follow.

To begin with this very question: 'Tis plainly set down that the interpretation of Scripture ought not to be by the private Spirit, 2 *Pet.* 1. That Christ has placed in his Church, Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Doctors for the building of his Body, that the Faithful may not be wasted every way by every blast of Doctrine, *Eph.* 4. That the Church is the Pillar and strength of our Faith; these and many more passages shall he find.

find to shew the interpretation of Scripture, ought to depend on the Church, and not be resolv'd into the particular opinion of any, pretend he never so much the Spirit, which is but a handsomer name for his own fancy. In other Texts he may read that the Scripture is useful for our comfort, for Preaching, exhorting, &c. but not one word of looking for our Faith in it, unless when it self is taken into the question; that is, when the question is whether the new Gospel be conformable to the old Laws, which is the sole matter of Controversie wherein our Saviour, *John 5.* and *St. Paul 17. Act.* speak of searching the Scripture; where 'tis evident that was the only thing in dispute.

If the question be of the Popes Supremacy; that is, *St. Peters* Primacy among the Apostles, (for so much only can belong to Scripture) we read expressly in the 10th. of *St. Matth.* *Simon* the first, and so is he stiled by other two Evangelists; whereas the order of the rest is not observ'd: We have Tribute paid for Christ and Him,

as.

as a special Officer, *Matth.* 17. we have him forwardest in the confession of Christ, *Matth.* 16. The Church promised to be built upon him; and the Keys in a peculiar manner to be delivered to him: So that no wonder if Tribute was particularly paid for him presently after? We have the Sheep of Christ in a singular way recommended to him *John* the last. We have our *Saviours* Prayer personally for him, with a charge given to confirm the rest, *Luk.* 22. We have him ordering the Church in the Election of *Matthias*, *Act.* 1. Him first Preaching to the *Jews*, *Act.* 2. Him first receiving the *Gentiles* by Gods special Order, *Act.* 10. For him the Church Prays, *Act.* 12. He first gives the Holy Ghost, *Act.* 8. In the Council he is the first that resolves the question, *Act.* 16. So that if the Scripture be sincerely consulted with theirs, all appearance, or rather evidence of *St. Peters* Primacy both in word and deed.

If the Question be of the Churches Infallibility, or Indeficiency, the  
Scrip-

Scripture will tell us Christ promised to be with his Preachers for ever, *Math.* 28. That the Gates of Hell should not prevail against his Church, *Mat.* 16. That the Holy Ghost should remain with his Disciples for ever, *Job.* 14. That there should be Elect at the end of the World, *Mat.* 24.

If the Question be of the *Real presence*, that is, that our *Saviours* Body is truly in the Blessed Sacrament, we that read *Mat.* 26. This is my body, *Luk.* 22. This is my Body which is given for you, *1 Cor.* 11. This is my Body which shall be delivered for you. And in the fore-going Chapter the Apostle presses it very Emphatically, Is not the Chalice we bless the participation of the blood of Christ? and the Bread we break, is it not the participation of our Lords Body? What can a plain and sincere believing heart answer to so clear and direct passages?

If the Question be of *Remission of sins* in the Church; do we not read the power of binding and loosing given to men, *Mat.* 18? of forgiving  
and.

and retaining, *John 20*? Do we not read the Apostles received the Ministry of Reconciliation, *2 Cor. 5.* and that the People glorified God for having given to men the power of remitting sins, *Mat. 9*? As also that we are to confess our sins one to another, *James 5.*

If the Question be of *Confirmation*, that is, giving the Holy Ghost; we read *John Baptist* testifying that he who sent him to Baptize with water, told him that *Christ* should Baptize in the Holy Ghost, *Mat. 1. Joh. 1.* And he that is not new born of Water and the Holy Ghost, cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, *Jo. 3.* Now this to be meant of that dissent of the Holy Ghost, which is after Baptism appears by our *Saviours* own declaration, *Act. 1.* Where he fore-tells his Apostles they should be Baptized in the Holy Ghost after not many days, the whole story whereof, is set down in the second Chapter, and in the eighth Chapt. They were sent to impart this Holy Ghost at *Samaria*, in the 11th. of *St. Peter*, Remembered  
the

the saying of our *Saviour* in the same sense, in the 15th. chap. *St. Paul*, uses the same Ceremony to twelve, after they were Baptized with the same Reflexion on *St. John Baptist*.

As for the Sacrament of *Order*, in it are two parts, the Mission and the outward Ceremony, both exprest largely in the Consecration of *Aaron* and his Sons, *Levit. 8.* The designation of Mission, *Mat. 10. Mar. 3. Luk 6.* and again the 22. when he gave them command to Consecrate the Blessed Sacrament for the Faithful, *Luk 10.* He design'd the 72. Disciples, *Heb 5.* The Law is establisht in general, as also in the 10th. of the *Rom.* How shall they Preach, unless they be sent? And though we cannot doubt but our *Saviour* used the outward Ceremony when he sent his Disciples, yet we have it exprest, *Joh. 20.* to be insufflation with those words, *Receive the Holy Ghost.* And in *Act. 13.* Fasting, and imposition of hands; and it is specified, that they so sent, were sent by the Holy Ghost, as also *1 Tim. 4.* is mentioned Imposition of the

the hands of the Presbytery by Prophecy.

For *Matrimonies* being a Sacrament, we every where read the Conjunction of Man and Wife is from God, *Gen. 2.* God brought *Eve* to *Adam*, *1 Cor. 11.* Neither Man without Woman, nor Woman without Man in our Lord, *Mat. 19.* *What God has joynd, let no man separate.* Nature gives to all Cultivated Nations to do this with an outward Ceremony; and therefore surely among those who hold it a special action of God, 'tis most fit to be perform'd by the Ministers of God. Now that Sanctification is due to it, we read *1 Cor. 7.* The Unbelieving Man is Sanctified by the Faithful Woman, and the Unbelieving Woman by the Faithful Man (to wit, in their common operation) otherwise your Children would be unclean; but now they are holy.

Of *extream Unction* there is not so frequent mention, but most manifest and undeniable: The Apostles anoynted the Sick with Oyl, and cured them,



them, *Mar. 6.* Is any man Sick among you, let him bring in the Priests of the Church, and let them Pray over him, anoynting him with Oyle in the Name of our Lord, and the Prayer of Faith shall Save the sick, and our Lord will ease him; and if he be in sin, his sins shall be forgiven him.

I cannot doubt, but what I have already said, fighting into an even Soul not carryed with any interest or prejudice to the contrary party, is sufficient to make him evidently see that the Letter of Scripture is clearly on the side of Antiquity and the Catholick Church. Yet must I not omit one point, because so much vaunted by our Adversaries with so little reason. The Catholick Church Administers the holy Eucharist somtimes in one kind, sometimes in both; Protestants only in both: The question comes, which of these practises is favoured by Scripture; and if we fairly read the Texts as they lye, nothing more manifest then that some places speak of both, some of one only;

*Joh. 6.*

*Job. 6.* This is a Bread coming down from Heaven, that whoever eats of it may not dye. *I am the Bread of life, which descended from Heaven; if any one eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever: He that eateth this Bread shall live for ever, Luk. the last; He took Bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to them, and their eyes were opened, and they knew him, and he vanished out of their sight, Act. 2.* And they were persevering in the Doctrine of the Apostles, and Communication of breaking of Bread and Prayer. So that if we distinguish betwixt the Communion and Consecration, in which last the Church inviolably observes both kinds, we shall find far more places in Scripture for one kind, than for both. But what shall we say to *St. Paul, 1 Cor. 11.* *Therefore whoever shall eat this Bread, or drink this Cup unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of our Saviour?* What means this *Or*? but that some even then took one without the other, else that disjunctive Syllable had been very improper, and put instead of its

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contrary, the conjunctive. Nor is there any material point in Controversy between us, on which we might not make the like descant out of Scripture, if it were in a convenient place; but what we bring here, is sufficient for an instance, and to shew what Scripture not violented, would do of it self to an ingenious Reader.

I easily believe every pert Batchelour of Art will be ready to tell us he can find ways to solve all these Texts, though there were twenty more: But that's not my enquiry, I seek here only what the outward face of Scripture is, and whither it is apt to lead an honest heart, left to its own strength. For those fine Disputants, if they meet one unacquainted with their juggling, they are able to make black white, and two Eggs three, and what-ever they list; and therefore 'twas necessary to set amongst the conditions of reading the Bible, this for a principal one; that they who by Scripture would come to the truth,  
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should by no means admit of any Interpreter, especially because of the danger of lighting on a false guide, before one has ground to discern which is a false, and which a true one. For the case is different betwixt a Catholick Interpreter & any other; that because he knows the Doctrine of Christ, that is, the sense of Scripture independently from the words, he cannot in substantial points teach amiss, without swerving from his own Faith; but any other having no rule for their belief, but the bare Letter of Scripture, is continually subject to error by every passion or prejudice which secretly guides his heart, and makes him as a rotten Cane that breaks and wounds the Learner on it with its splinters.

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*Seventh*

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Seventh Reflexion.

*The reading the Fathers, will bring  
a man to Truth; to which also  
natural Reason is very available.*

**N**othing more strange to me than  
that any who acknowledges  
Scripture should reject the *Fa-  
thers*, since he cannot renounce them  
without impudently professing him-  
self with his little Wit, and gene-  
rally less study, able to penetrate  
deeper into the understanding of  
Scripture, than so many Ages so emi-  
nently famous for Industry, Learning,  
and Holiness, and this because they  
were Men, as if himself were none;  
but of so far a higher Orb, that we  
must rather confide in his Ability and  
Honesty, than in all Man-kind before  
him, which is so base and abominable  
a Pridg, I wonder any Auditory can  
endure it.

But to come to our purpose : Since the Fathers both received the Preaching of the Apostles nearer hand than we, and held the truth of Scripture full as strongly as we : - Since they spent as much time in the study of it, and proceeded with as sincere hearts as we, it cannot be doubted but they had both the means and wills of finding the truth as well as we, and by consequence actually knew it as well as we ; and therefore in matters of Faith what was their universal Tenet, cannot with any colour of reason be deny'd, or so much as question'd by us, as disagreeing with Scripture.

Besides, their writings being large and numerous, their sense and meaning in most places of importance, must needs be sufficiently explicated; and so experience has taught us, that the more judicious *Protestants* who gave themselves to reading the Fathers approacht in judgment for very many points near to *Catholicks*, and what detain'd them from returning entirely to the ancient Union, was only a secret Pride of not submitting themselves

selves to the *Charches Tradition* in some particular instances, wherein they thought Antiquity was not so convincingly evident; though I deny not, but a wrong apprehension of Catholick tenets presum'd upon the explication of particular Doctors, might unhappily contribute to this their obstinacy. No doubt then but any indifferent and understanding Reader, having pre-imbibed no false maxime, if he bestow competent pains in perusing the Fathers, must necessarily at length become *Catholick*.

Especially if he take this rule along with him, to consider the Protestant practise compar'd to the practise of the Fathers and former Church; and he shall see that this they call *Reformation*, has taken away under colour of abuses, the very things themselves, in which the abuses were pretended; like Surgeons who cut off a Legg to cure a sore in't, or *Mahomet* that abolish Wine to avoyd Drunkenness; and in the mean while spend most of their time and wit in caviling at petty questions, wherein they

vainly strive to shew the Church has err'd.

As for *Natural Reason*, none expect it alone should be an entire means to attain the knowledg of supernatural truths, but only a serviceable help by shewing they are so far from contradicting reason, that nothing can be more conformable to it; and he that seeks this, if he come arm'd with true Philosophy, may arrive to a full contentment of his understanding and heart in all that concerns so noble an enquiry, now, since Catholick Religion has been so intelligibly divulged in the world.

St. *Austin* makes mention, that he found the *Trinity* in the *Platonick Books*; if you ask me how this came to pass, I answer, God provided in *Alexandria*, a City much given to Learning, one *Annenius Hermias* a great Philosopher and a Christian; he to make Christianity more acceptable, sought to joyn it to *Platonick Philosophy*, which was no hard matter to do, *Plato* being, as *Nymphisius* says, but *Moses* speaking Greek, that  
is,



is, One who having fallen upon the Hebrew Learning had suckt much out of it: Now this *Ammenius* finding in *Plato* the Idea's of Being and Unity, and Life, and such other airy notions easie to be wrought on, endeavoured by these to instill the Mystery of the Trinity into his Schollers, with such happy success, that of three prime Wits of those times, the one, *Origen* became so great and eminent a Doctor of the Church as Antiquity acknowledged him; the other two, *Ammelius* and *Plotinus* were esteem'd the principal Conductors of the Platonick School, and brought in among them those imitations of the Trinity which are found in their discourses, and in the writings of their Followers: So amiable is truth, that the very likeness of it enamours the understanding, how much more the substance, were it rightly pursued and truly discovered? which without question may be accomplisht, Revelation generally being intended to lead us to it, the terms wherein 'tis deliver'd so natural, and the thing it self the natural

substance of Almighty God, depending on no chance or free disposition.

Yet has this glorious hope been only since Christian Religion was planted in the world: Who could expect the like before *Christ*? Undoubtedly if from any, it must have been *Aristotle*, the only person that among the Heathens wrote any thing solidly. Of him then 'tis reported, that on his Death-bed, considering the miseries poor man-kind fell into by errors, and that it was not in the power of Nature to deliver man from them, he pronounced that notable sentence, That *Homer* had a great deal of reason to make the Gods take humane shapes, so to draw the unhappy world out of error. Behold the Incarnation of the Son of God grounded as firmly as any Christian can speak of it, and this by the pure strength of reason: And now, after this Heavenly Doctrine publisht, shall there be found Christians so unreasonable as to think it against reason, that God should become man to save us from  
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our sins, the true root of all our misery.

The like is of the *holy Eucharist*: Did but men understand the Metaphysics of their own growth or augmentation, they would find little difficulty in that now so dis-believed, though in it self so divine a Myltery; but Ignorance and Pride makes that held absurd, which is, if faithfully penetrated, most conformable to nature.

I shall add only one word more for their sakes who love reason. This Principle being taken, that all things are govern'd the perfectest way they can be, in conformity to the general rules of nature, which Divines use to express in these words, *God always does that which is best*: The Creation of Man, his Fall, his Conduct, both before and since the coming of *Christ*, the end of the World, the last judgment, the Resurrection, the several states of souls before, and of men after Resurrection, Beatitude, Damnation, and all other points of Catholic belief, as the Church, its Govern-

vernment, the Sacraments, and whatever else belongs of necessity to faith or obedience, will appear so reasonable, that none of a just capacity and unbiassed mind, could find any ground of exception.

'Tis true, some pains are required to arrive at this knowledge, as there are to understand *Archimedes*, or the *Conicks of Pergam*; nor must we expect after Dinner over a cup of Wine to penetrate the depth of all these points, or by slightly reading some Treatise of them, as we would do a Romance: The Masters in Geometry or *Algebra* know they never acquired those Sciences so cheap, and therefore since the skill of gaining Heaven is both of a higher strain in it self, and of infinite greater consequence to us, not only in order to the governing our lives here, but the attaining eternal felicity hereafter, let them be content either simply to believe these truths, or seek out Directors, and employ a competency of labour in pursuit of them.

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Eighth Reflexion.*Of Conference and Disputation in  
common.*

**A**FTER the way of reading, there offers it self that of personal discourse, or Dialogue, which may be perform'd in two sorts: One, when he who is to learn, contributes on his side, bearing himself with a desire to discover the truth, and helping it on by acknowledging candidly what seems to him sufficiently certain out of his former persuasion, and proposing only wherein he finds difficulty, and asking no more; then to have that clear'd to him which some preoccupation had obstructed: This manner of treaty is called *Conference*; and is, no doubt, a far shorter and more efficacious way than reading, provided the Teacher be an accomplished Master of his profession; for the Writer can  
speak.

speake but in common, whereas the Discourser sees by the opponents answer wherein, particularly, his difficulty lyes, and so spares and contracts many passages which the other is forc'd to explain purely at hazard; besides, the very way of Oral delivery is far more intelligible, and gives a singular Energy to what is so taught.

The other manner of discoursing, is when they stand upon their guard, and yeild nothing out of fore-knowledg, but will be absolutely convinced, and see evidence for what ever they are to pass; and this is properly call'd *Disputing*. The parties in this kind of contention must indispensibly be but two, without any third to moderate the disputation, though one may perhaps be sometimes necessary to moderate the Disputants, who otherwise, thorow passion, too often neglect the observance of their rules, whereof the chief is that one meddle not with the others Office as long as he holds to the Laws of disputation. The parties being thus confin'd to two, a Disputant and a Respondent; the

the first care of the Disputant must be to state, or rather demand of the Respondent to state the Question, if he suspect the terms of the *Thesis* to be equivocal, for then he is to oblige the Respondent to explicate his meaning, to whom that office properly belongs, because he cannot be compel'd to hold by the words of his Position any more than himself intends by them.

Besides, he may require the Respondent to give a reason of his tenet, if the opposite be more common, or maintained by Authors, he is bound not to forsake without some weighty motive: For as truly 'tis an impudence to hold any thing in such a case without producing a reason, so the reason failing, the Defendant is confuted, though his Position be not toucht by any Argument of the Adversary.

Neither ought there be more Reasons than one for one Truth, not that many may not be found to prove the same Conclusion, but that there ought among them one at least be irrefragable.

ble and wholly unconvincible of defect; for if none be such, the Respondent should not maintain his assertion as true, (unless for exercise-sake) since himself thinks peradventure 'tis false, having no proper knowledg that it cannot be otherwise.

The second duty of a Disputant (where the debate is serious and design'd for finding out the truth) is to propose no Argument, but such as in his opinion seems convincing, we cannot expect of any that he absolutely know so much since all are fallible in particulars; even Geometricians themselves sometimes mistake a truth for demonstrated which really is not, only 'tis to be expected that he esteem his Argument convictive, and propound it as such, and make account that himself (how-ever others may be better furnisht) is overcome, if, fair Law being given him, he do not overcome: for his part being to prove, if he perform not that, he fails of his end, which is to lose the day; and if before he begin, he have not a just degree of hope to make out what he:



he undertakes, he comes not to dispute, but to mock the Auditory, and perswade them into an expectance of what in reality he knows he cannot effect.

His third duty, is to proceed in form, and every attempt of his should in rigour be a Syllogism; but, among expert and ingenious Logicians, this severity is not insisted on, unless upon a pinch where there is some special difficulty about the Consequence, for then the strict attendance to form, concludes the question otherwise to proceed, as they call it, by *Enthymenies*, that is, by putting one only Antecedent whence the deny'd proposition is averr'd to follow, is the shorter and clearer method; taking away both a multitude of words and confusion of Notions, as well from the Disputer as the Answerer: If the Antecedent be false, it is but one, and so the denial or distinction of it, puts the Arguer in his ready way: If the Consequence be naught, 'tis to be proved; and so the Disputation goes on smoothly.

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His fourth duty is to apply his Argument to what is immediately deny'd, and bring that in his Consequent, whither it be a proposition or sequel, he is engaged to make good. These are the duties principally necessary to the Disputant; for though anciently he had liberty to make what demands he pleased, pertinent to his proof, before the Respondent saw what he aim'd at by them; yet our latter School-practise has abrogated this custom as very subject to circumvent the Respondent, and more captrious than any solid means of retrieving the truth.

As for the *Answerer*, his first duty is to remember his Name, that he sits there to Answer, and so ought to speak no more than he is askt; but keep himself within compass of his known solemn words, *I Grant*, *I Deny*, *I Distinguish*. As for Granting, 'tis at his Peril; for Denying, he ought not refuse any proposition known to be true of it self. For the third, he must shew the Arguers words bear more senses than one,  
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else he gives no distinction; and that the parts of his distinction are to the purpose of the Argument, else the distinction is frivolous. This he must do when the Arguer never demands it; otherwise he must only give his distinction granting one part, and denying the other, that the Arguer may chuse whither he will accept of what is granted, or prove what's deny'd.

If he grant a proposition before deny'd, or deny one before granted, he hath lost the day. Whether he may distinguish a proposition which before he had simply admitted or deny'd, is a question touching the honour of the Defendant; but certainly in rigour 'tis lawful to be done, for we cannot suppose any proposition is admitted or rejected in all senses possible, and therefore upon farther occasion he may declare in what sense it was before accepted or deny'd.

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## Nineth Reflexion.

### *The Application of these Rules to Religions*

**B**Ut to apply these Observations to our present Theme, we must cast our Eyes upon the aim and scope of our disputation, which we see sometimes done for exercise of young Schollers to innure them to a subtle and rigorous manner of discourfing, and make them perfect in the consequences to their tenets; which is a laudable course according to the worth of the Sciences they converse in. Others meet for Recreation, a commendable way of passing their time for those who have no better means of spending it. Others for ostentation of their wits, a vanity pardonable in youth.

All this, when it concerns *Religion*, takes quite another hue; since there  
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we look for truth in the most necessary part, & most important business of our life; wherein to be deceived is the deepest damage that can befall us, beyond the ruine of our Estate, or loss of Life; beyond the extinguishing our Family and deprivation of all that's dear to us in the world: Wherefore he that maintains any Religious position meerly for ostentation of his wit, is guilty of a most Sacrilegious action, and commits upon the person he seduces, the highest sort of Murther mans Nature is capable of: As also to make a pure recreation of such Disputes, is a most unsufferable contempt of God, and Bliss, and Divinity. For exercise it may be necessary, and so justifiable, if known to have that intention, and under such colour no wrong persuasion be instill'd into the Auditory.

Yet is all this far from our business: the dispute for which these rules are design'd, being a kind of trying the truth of Religion; whence they who assist at it, may take an apprehension what they are to follow all their life; and

and therefore 'tis not to be ventur'd on without a just security, neither by the one to argue, nor the other to answer; and since no less then demonstration can assuredly settle a disputable point; he, who undertakes to prove in this sort of Disputation, ought first to engage his Cr dit that in his Conscience he esteems the Argument he means to offer, demonstrative, however he may fail in proposing it, either thorow the want of skill in himself, or over-proportion of abilities in his Adversary, or the difficulty of well opening his mind, and making the truth appear.

This if he refuse to do, he is to be protested against for a Thief and Robber, as our *Saviour* calls them, who abuse their Hearers, and draw their souls for some private interest into eternal damnation: the Auditory is to be advertis'd, that such a Disputation as the Arguer pretends to, is a meer Juggle and Imposture, a brabbling base Counter-scuffle, not fit for a grave and serious person to have a share in, a pure loss of time, and an im-

impertinent trouble both to the spectators and actors.

The Respondents task is not so rigorous; 'tis enough for him to maintain his Adversary cannot convince his Tenet of falsity, he being but a Defendant, not a prover for this passage.

So far for Opponents and Defendants in common. Now if we apply this to *Catholicks*, and those who have parted from them, we see their grand difference consists in this, that the *Catholick* holds his Doctrine, because it came down to him by his Fore-fathers from Christ, and relies upon them for the truth of this descent: The Adversaries universally depend either on Scripture or Reason; this last is known to be no sufficient ground of a Doctrine held by Authority: As for Scripture, *Catholicks* maintain it as strongly as any Separatists what ever; nor can it be known to be Scripture, but upon their Credit and Testimony, and therefore all Arguments out of it, against them, bear in their fore-head a prejudice of being

being either false, or at least uncertain, seeing so many, and so Learned could neither be ignorant of what is in Scripture plainly, nor men who have that esteem of Scripture which they taught the Seditaries, could hold any thing against it.

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## Tenth Reflexion.

*Some particulars belonging to Catholics and their Adversaries.*

**F**ROM these Premises follow some very considerable differences between Catholics and Protestants concerning Disputation. First, That a Catholic, for himself, ought not admit any Dispute at all, because he relies on a better ground, an infallible & irrefragable Authority; for as he thinks reason an incompetent judge in matters of this Nature, so against disputing out of Scripture he has two unanswerable Objections; one,



one, That he holds his Faith by the same rule he receives Scripture ; and if they should prove contrary to one another ( which is impossible ) it would induce him to believe neither, and not make him of a new Religion, but none ! The second is, He who argues out of Scripture, proceeds upon Texts, whose sense is disputable in the words themselves ; but the Catholick is assured of the sense, as far as touches Faith before-hand ; 'tis in vain therefore for him to look in an uncertainty for what he knows far more surely already ; for all he can learn out of Scripture, can be but by the interpretation and deduction of private men ; whereas what he knoweth by Tradition, is by the testification of the whole Church , that is by an assurance infinitely greater.

But farther , If any Catholick admit of dispute for his own sake, he immediately ceases to be a Catholick ; for Disputation being so clear a doubt, is both unnecessary and impertinent where there is none ; nor can he

he have any doubt, unless he suspect his rule, which if once he do, he is no longer a *Catholick*. The *Protestant* on the other side, building all his Faith on the bare Letter of the Bible, so long disputed, and everlastingly disputable, must, if he be rational, live in perpetual suspense; for the very opposition of so many Wise and Learned men, who all say these words, signifie not what is necessary to his conclusion, must needs make any impartial and considerate mind unsatisfied about the exposition of ambiguous words so ordinary a rock of mistaking. Therefore the *Protestant* proceeds irrationally, if he does not always demand searching and disputation, till experience teach him there is neither end of it, nor for it; he must resolve either to be ignorant, and trust, or else to dispute without end, and in very truth his disputing is to no end: For suppose he be the Arguer, and convince his Adversary, he has only gain'd this, That the person he deals with is either weak, or peradventure surpriz'd,  
and

and in his better wits may be able to solve the difficulty that on a sudden puzzles him. Place then the Protestant in the Defendants room, and let him prosper and maintain his position; it follows not that a more skillful Opponent could not have overcome him; so that on neither side is there any security for him, because he brings no demonstration, but only the appearance of ambiguous words.

Out of this followeth a second disparity, which is, that it concerneth not the Catholick whether he can answer his Adversaries Argument, farther than his private satisfaction of knowledge. For his rule being to depend ultimately from the Churches testimony, and immediately from his Pastors and Doctors, and they from the Church: Howsoever, the Disputation goes, he is warranted, and it is not only convenient, but also fashionable for him to refer himself to the greater skill of others. Whereas the Protestant, who is taught to see his Doctrine, & to profess to rely upon no body but his own  
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eyes, betrays his rule and first principle, if he refer himself to any other, and shame his cause : Wherefore, Learned or Unlearned, Boy or Girl, if sufficient to be a Protestant, must be the last refuge, the inmost Tower of defence to his own cause, and must have in his own brain and heart a sufficiency to defend his Religion against all Opponents. For if he once flye to anothers Authority, he is no more Protestant ; hath no reason to stand separated from the Church of *Rome*, and must of necessity flye back to her, since in question of Authority, there is no other comparable to hers ; and the first reason of leaving her, is, that *all men are fallible* ; that is, that no humane Authority is to be accepted.

Another disparity betwixt these parties is, that if the Catholick play the Opponent, he can dispute but on one point, that is, of the *Infallibility of the Church*, because his Adversary is not obliged to deny any other ; for take what point you will besides, and you may be a perfect Protestant, whither

ther you hold it or not, unless you should instance in the 39 Articles which yet Protestantism, precisely considered, binds none to defend. The Authority of Bishops is the grand Article distinguishing it from all other Sectaries: Yet when 'tis for their turn, the French and Scotch Presbyterians, so implacable Enemies to that Government, are their dear Brethren. The *Greeks, Lutherans, Socinians, Anabaptists*, how many positions do they maintain different from Protestantism? Nevertheless, when it pleases a Protestant to make his boasts of the large extent of the reformed Churches, all these are of his Communion. Nay when he talks of his kind of Universal Church, no *Arrian, Eutichian, Nestorian*, or what else soever damn'd Heretick has a share against Popery, is excluded; but will by him, and must by Protestant principles be admitted as a true Member of the pure unblemish'd Spouse of Christ, when which nothing can be either more absurd in it self, or dishonourable to our Saviour, or de-

destructive of the true Church. So that if a *Catholick* be to argue, he loses his labour in disputing of any Doctrine but the *Churches infallibility*; because he advances not a jot by his Victory in any other point, since the want of any one Article makes a man no *Catholick*, or which is all one, a *Protestant*. On the other side the *Catholick* is bound to be Defendant in many points, that is, in all we maintain as of Faith or Traditional.

The conclusion therefore is, the *Catholick* has much to maintain, and little to oppose; the *Protestant* great choyce what he will oppose, and little to maintain; so that on this hand his advantage is very much in matter of disputation; all which difference flows from that known excellent Axiome, *Bonum ex integra causa malum ex quovis defectu*. The *Catholick* has a Religion, has an art or skill of going to Heaven: Now such a thing imports a *Body* of rules, and a body cannot consist without many members or parts, every one of which must be defended and made good. All other  
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Sects are but deficiencies more or less from this Body; those more, who cleave fastest to their rule of deficiency; that is, to the rejecting all that cannot be *convinced out of Scripture*: those less, who seeing the inconvenience soonest, in practise recede soonest from that insufficient rule, and contradict their main ground of *all being fallible*, by forcing their Subjects to hold their Tenets without Authority, themselves having forsaken the Legitimate One, by which the Catholick Church adhears to Tradition.

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## Eleventh Reflexion.

*Some particular Caveats for Catholicks.*

THE Catholick Defendant having so unequal a task, some few considerations will be necessary to him. First: That he never offer to

maintain against Arguments drawn out of Nature, such positions as he is not able by natural principles to satisfy himself in; As against an *Artian* or *Sabellian*, let him not by reason undertake to defend, how the same thing can be three and one, unless he beforehand assured he understands it well, and rests satisfied himself in the point; it being scarce possible to give the auditory satisfaction if he have it not himself, especially where the disputant is subtle and dextrous in managing his Argument. The like reason is of the *Blessed Sacrament*, to shew how the same body can be in many places at once.

In these cases therefore he is to keep himself upon the general defence, that we believe mysteries of Faith, whither we can answer every Argument of Philosophy or no: That the Word of God is able to assure us above the clearest demonstration, and beyond all the kinds of evidence our natural capacities can arrive to. Neither do our Adversaries leave us without justification of this method;  
even



even by their own proceedings, since in the great mysteries of the *Trinity*, and *Incarnation* they all acknowledg the same difficulty; and for the Sacrament of the Altar, some of them tell us, *Christ* is really and truly present, but in a manner not understandable.

Nor is this cautious proceeding, when we defend Christian Mysteries so peremptory a rule, but by discretion it may have some exception; for our Adversaries are generally so weak, that they take most of their axiomes and proofs in these kinds of cases, rather upon confidence we will not deny them, then that themselves can sustain them: In the mystery of the *Eucharist*, put them to demonstrate a body cannot be in two places at once, and twenty to one you'll find their ward to be that our Doctors confess it, or they see it by experience; whereof this is no argument against Gods Omnipotency, and the other at every ones pleasure to grant or deny; so that if you understand your Adversaries strength, you may

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easily perhaps non suit him by only urging him to prove what you know is beyond his ability; but this is a hazard, and you are shamed if you fail: Yet I do not by this intend to say the Adversary can be able to make a true demonstration against any mystery; but only that every Catholic, or every Divine, is not able to give a weak Auditory a solution sufficiently seeming to hinder it from thinking it is a demonstration, though it be a pure Paralogism.

Another Caveat for our Defendant is, that he engage not himself upon the Opinion of one party of Divines, or undertake to maintain against his Adversary, what even some of his own Doctors oppose without censure, and so is rather a Scholastical than Controversial question; to this purpose is to be noted that some Opinions conclude for necessary what others confine to some one part; as in the point of *Infallibility*, some place it in the Pope, some in the Council, others in both; there are again who lodge it in the whole Church,

Church, which contains all these and more : Here the safe and prudent Controvertist chuses that which is most ample, and so quits himself both of the trouble and danger in answering the arguments made against the single parties, and wisely keeps within the strong hold of Christianity, wherein all agree.

'Tis true, if the Defendant be put to declare his position, and an argument press him, he may be sometimes bound to chuse one Opinion of Divines before another, or rather indeed forced to follow that with which he is best acquainted ; wherefore the rule I have given is intended only to serve in its proper place and season. This method, besides the advantage already explicated, abridges very much the number of Controversies ; brings the Parties far nearer to agreement ; and produces more stability in Religion, while 'tis in some measure discern'd what essentially belongs to it, what not.

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Twelfth Reflexion.

*On the Quality of some sorts of Arguments out of Scripture.*

THE next thing we have to look into, is the Nature of the Arguments to be used in these Disputations, which by the precedent discourse we see are of three kinds; out of *Scripture, Fathers, and Reason*. To begin with the first, 'tis clear, that from thence arguments may be deduced two ways: One, out of the pure force of the words; the other, out of the connexion of sense and discourse acknowledg'd in the words.

In the former the Arguers either press the words of one sole sentence which they alledg, thinking to make evident that their pretended sense is the very meaning of the words; or else they bring a Conglobation of divers places where one fortifies another,

ther, absolutely concluding that the sense of words so often reiterated, cannot chuse but be the true mind of the Scripture. When the conclusion depends on the words of one Text, and the force of the argument no other then the Gramatical or Dictionary sense of them; 'tis ordinarily a pittiful trifle, and the whole Disputation meerly Boys play, and a Construing of *Terence*; it being almost, if not altogether impossible in our Controversies to find a place of Scripture convincing, (and such only are fit to be insisted on;) because the down-right signification of a word, especially in an undogmatical delivery of ones mind, is more wavering & changeable than the Aspin-leaf.

I remember, as I once prest this very thing to a Disputant; he immediately objected that passage, *Abraham genuit Isaac*, which he thought unexplicable in any other sense; and upon the suddain I was not furnisht with the divers acceptions of this word *Genuit*; but God provided me an answer out of the first of St. *Mat-*  
*thew,*

*threw*, where 'tis said, *Jorab* genuit *Oziam*, though there were some intermedial Generations omitted: whence plainly appear'd that from the precise words, *Abraham* genuit *Isaac*, it could not with certainty be inferr'd that *Abraham* was *Isaac's* Father. Now after such an instance, what evidence can be expected, if we proceed severely out of the simple signification of the bare text of Scripture?

Besides, who can be so shallow to think a Sect that has men of any wit in it should maintain a Position against that sense of the Letter which every Boy penetrates, but it has arm'd it self with some subterfuge which ordinarily speaking, cannot be weaker than an inference which depends on so uncertain and variable a ground as the use of words in our speech.

Nevertheless this kind of Argument is both the most used, and much wanted on; For example, the *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* agree in saying there's Bread in the blessed Sacrament::

ment : Their Argument against Catholicks is, that Christ calls it Bread after Consecration ; if we answer, He calls it not nakedly *Bread*, but *this Bread* or *Bread of Life*, or with some other Character to distinguish it from ordinary Bread, they presently cry out the word *Bread* in *Thomas Thomassin* signifies only Bread made of Wheat, and sing Victory, as if nothing were answered. So in the interpretation of the Text, *He took Bread and blessed it, and gave it, &c.* If we should desire instead of the word *Blessed*, to put *turned into his Body*, and tell them that the Blessing was the saying, *This is my Body*, they will be absolutely enraged, as if we committed the greatest absurdity in the World, asking in what Dictionary or Author to Bless signifies, to turn into ones Body, and will by no means hear that in this case Blessing was the pronouncing such words in those circumstances wherein it must necessarily signify the turning into his Body. It is possible that men otherwise, neither unlearn'd nor unwitty should

should be so over-weend and blindly partial as to believe there's any force in such allegations, which every Boy that construes not by rote, but understands what he speaks, is able to discover?

But the reason I conceive of this shallowness and impertinency is, that this disputative kind of men never rais'd their understanding to Geometrical demonstrations, or any solid discourse, nor indeed beyond the practise of Grammer rules in Scripture, and some quaint criticism of the same pitch; and so are fit to make a fine smooth discourse in a Pulpit, or talk plausibly to unlearned persons, who are altogether ignorant and incapable of knowing the rigour of disputation; but as for composing an argument that should bear the touch of judicious Examiners, they are utterly unable; though like Junior Sophisters they can pop off a great many slight objections, and run a large course from one to another, having a shew of learning, but voyd of the power and substance thereof.

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Little different is the Authority they boast of as their great *Achilles*, out of *Theodoret*, and an obscure writer, called *Gelasius*, who say the nature of Bread remains after Consecration ; and if you tell them the word *Nature* signifies the *Quality*, even in our ordinary speech, they instantly triumph, thinking the most Grammatical sense must carry the Day, without consideration either of the words circumstance, or connexion of the sense. Which if any Schollar of an upper Form should do, he could not but expect a smart-reward from his Master. Yet these kinds of quibbles are in a manner their strongest Arguments out of Scripture, by which they seek to over-throw the Religion of their Fore-fathers.

Another way they have still weaker then this, taking words which signify no such thing as the pretended conclusion, and yet perforce you must understand that the Scripture is clear against you ; as when they cite *Esay* 58. *Your Wills are found in your Fastings*, to prove that voluntary Fasts are

are unlawful ; and *Mat. 15.* That which enters into the mouth defiles not the soul, but that which comes out from the heart. When against works of Supererogation they alledge *Luk. 17.* Having done all that is commanded, you say, you are unprofitable Servants ; and infinite other places of the same nature : In all which neither is that they aym at by their allegation said, (so much as in the outward Letter) nor any shew of the least connexion with their pretence : Nay very often such passages favour the adverse party, as in the instances above, the first reprehends the Fasts of the wicked Jews, because they continued their impieties, notwithstanding their outward afflicting themselves, which implyes the duty it self to be good, but their manner of performing it unjustifiable. The second clearly concludes, that since the disobedience in eating forbidden meats, flows from the heart, 'tis sin not to abstain. The third supposes plainly that the Commandments may be fulfill'd, which Protestants deny,

deny, and import more may be done, which is all that Catholicks affirm.

Both these sorts of Arguments I confess are common to each parties, but with this difference; a Catholick relies not finally upon such glosses for his Religion, as being fixt on the firm and solid basis of receiving his Faith by succession from Christ; and therefore in his mouth such inferences are condescendencies to the weakness of his Auditory, whom he hopes by this Milk to make capable of stronger meat: But for Protestants, such conjectural deductions are the sole foundation of their belief, on which Sandy ground they strive to persuade their followers to build their Religion, hindering them from settling on the sure rock of the Church.

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## The Thirteenth Reflexion.

*On other sorts of Arguments, drawn out of Scripture.*

**B**UT leaving these Shuttlecock Arguments, which are easily banded to and fro on either side; let us look on the next kind, which makes use of a heap of Texts to prove the Conclusion intended. And this I deny not to be a solid proceeding, if it find both a Logician to manage it, and an Auditory capable of it; which both are very rare; and therefore this course is fitter for writing and reading with deliberation, than for a suddain conflict upon the place.

There are two ways of handling this Weapon: One simply crouds a world of Texts together, giving every one its force in short, and overwhelming

whelming the Auditour by their multitude. This does well in an Oration or Sermon, and carryes a great resemblance of strength: But if it comes to be Anatomiz'd by the Adversary, and the weakness of every one shew'd in particular; the Conclusion stands naked and ashamed, being quite stript of all the fine Feathers it had borrowed to adorn it self, and the Authour, astonisht to see his own opinion so unexpectedly changed: And therefore in a dispute where the Adversary has his Law to answer one by one, this accumulation serves to little purpose more than to spend time.

The other way of employing a conglobation is, to pretend to bring all Texts which are favourable to both sides, and by comparing them to shew which party stands with Scripture, which against it. But first, 'Tis evident this manner is not proper for a regular combat, the Adversary having always a right to demand the planting his own Battery himself, and is not bound to accept it from his Enemy.

nemy. Again, to do it well, and make this comparison as it ought, so many things are to be consider'd, that 'tis rather the subject of a Book, then fit for the proposal of one party, to which the other is to answer immediately upon the place.

For, there ought to be examin'd what Texts formally contain the position to be prov'd, what only some connexed Verity, out of which it may be drawn, and the degrees of this connexion: Again, what speeches are proper, what Metaphorical, and the degrees of Translation: Again, The occasions of the speaking, and the coherence with actions or words precedent and subsequent. All which observations are so many, and so tedious to be well perform'd, that they can by no means be brought into the brevity of a Dialogistical Opposition, without making whole Sermons on one side and the other, which will be irksome and displeasing to the Auditory, and have at last no effect, our memory being not able to carry away such a heap of notions so perfectly,

fectly, as to be capable of framing an exact judgment of them.

Besides, if any one Text of these were absolutely convincing, the rest would be burthensome, and but hinder and embroil the evidence of the Conclusion: If ~~no~~ one clearly prove, then all-together can make but one side more probable than the other, that is, neither side true and certain; and so are of little effect towards the ending Controversies, but purely a superfluous labour and tryal of wits, not a deciding Questions, or setting the Auditory in the right way to Heaven.

There is another way call'd indeed *arguing out of Scripture*; but truly and in effect is arguing out of Reason: For, it consists in this, that you take places of Scripture containing verities known and admitted by both parties, the sence and meaning of the Texts being perfectly agreed on; and out of these, make your way to other unknown Truths which you desire to discover. Now, clearly, it availes as much to take the naked  
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conclusions in themselves, without the words of Scripture; for, they being acknowledged truth, 'twas needless to bring proof of them; so that Scripture stands but for an Ornament in this discourse, and the force of the Argument is drawn from confess'd truths; and so is plainly a discourse of Reason, not of Authority, though it may a-far off depend upon Scripture. We will not, therefore, at present, trouble our selves with discussing this sort of Arguments, but remit it to the examination of Reason whereon it depends.

But because some are so madly careless of their own Salvation, that they content themselves with probability for Religion, and will hazard their hope of Heaven upon any adventure, especially if Scripture be made the pretence. We are forced to speak of a third manner of disputing by Scripture, in which their aime is not whether the point propounded be true or false, for, that is not intended to be convinced; but whether side is the more probable or plausible, pure-



purely considering Scripture. And clearly, he who pretends to proceed in this, according to Conscience, is bound to examine all that is in Scripture concerning the point; then diligently weighing both sides of the Scales with the best judgment God affords him, so to pronounce Sentence; wherein he ought not only consider the number of places, but their nature, and be able to compare their qualities together.

Now concerning this kind of disputation, 'tis impossible any can with reason perswade himself that he, or any other can produce all that out of Scripture may be alledged: Since our Saviour himself has shew'd us by his example, that Arguments may be drawn, and those efficacious ones from Texts where we least dream of any such sense: As, when disputing against the *Sadduces*, he made this argument; God is God of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*; But, he is not the God of nothing; therefore, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* shall rise again, or remain still alive in Soul, with hope of their

their Body and Resurrection. Who can be confident of producing or knowing all that is in Scripture concerning any point, when the truth may lye in such unlikely places? surely it must be a great, either ignorance or temerity to undertake it.

Nor indeed, can we ever arrive so far in this way of search as really to know what is more or less probable out of Scripture; but only what, out of those places which our selves know, or at most, what those Authors we have seen, do bring, is more or less probable. Whence 'tis evident that those who relye on Scripture, or rather profess so, truly rely not on it, but their own or their Teachers diligence, whom they suppose to know the whole latitude of Scripture-proof, which nevertheless is not only false, but generally impossible.

As for the qualification of the places themselves, I must divide them into two kinds: The first is, when the Text either does, or is pretended

to

to say in exprefs terms the Conclufion of the Proponent, or to be fully equivalent to it, or in which the outward found of the words is clear for his *Tenet*. Such are on the Catholick fide, *This is my Body* : Simon the first, *The Gates of Hell* ~~shall~~ *shall not prevail againft my Church* : *Whofe fins ye forgive, fhall be forgiven*, and feveral others for feveral points. Whereas the Proteftant has not any one Text of this Nature againft the Catholick, unlefs they make ufe of the precept againft *graven Images*, which concerns Chriftians no more then the *Sacrificing a Lamb at Eaſter*, being purely a Law given to the Jews. The other kind, ſuch Texts as have, or are pretended to have a ſence, out of which the Proponents Conclufion follows : ſo that there may be concerning theſe a double incertitude ; one whether the place produced ſignifies what the Proponent intends : And ſecondly, whether out of that follows the pretended Conclufion. And thus much in reference to Scriptural Diſputation.

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## The Fourteenth Reflexion.

*On the Arguments drawn out of  
the Fathers.*

**T**He second Nest of Authority, out of which, Arguments take wing, is the copious Library of *Fathers*; where 'tis to be consider'd, that, whether *Protestant* or *Catholick* be to dispute; his Argument has a double remove from the Conclusion: For, whereas both sides allow that the right sence of Scripture is of absolute certainty, and so all the difficulty runs about what is the true meaning of the letter; concerning *Fathers* there are two Questions, one whether it be their opinion which the Arguent says is so; the other, whether it be truth after 'tis confess'd to be their opinion; for neither *Catholick*

lick nor Protestant agrees to all things that one or two Fathers may hold; nay Protestants defie them all, and even Catholicks require an Universality in them to make them infallible. So that if either Catholick or Protestant be the ~~Arguer~~, he ought first to accord with his Adversary, to stand to such one or more Fathers as he purposes to produce, or else not to contend, for 'tis but labour lost, and breath cast away.

The Protestants use to make two comparisons in Fathers; one in Age, the other in Learning or Reputation. As for the former, they much insist upon the three first Centuries, supposing them purer then the rest. In which their aime, without doubt, is to reject all; because, when they list, they tell you the Impurity of Doctrine began as soon as the Apostles were dead. By which impurity, if they mean damnable Errours, all the Authority of Fathers is evacuated; for then their Testimony is no further good, then it pleases every Minister to declare the point contro-

verted to be, or not to be a damnable error; and so even the three first Ages are blown away with the rest. But if the point in controversie be no damnable Error, then the Fathers Authority with them is not to be esteem'd; it being ~~free~~ to err, so it be not damnably, and there being no obligation to know unnecessary truths.

In a word, If the Church can err, and has erred these thousand years, 'tis but courtesy to say she did not so the former six hundred; and truly the Fathers have no Authority at all; but if it cannot err, nor has erred, then the Fathers of the latter ages are as good Witnesses as those of the former, so they be indued with *Universality*.

Their other distinction is as little to the purpose. For, we do not cite Fathers as Doctors, whose opinion is no better than their Reason; but for Witnesses, whose Authority consists in a grave and moderate knowledge of what is believed and practiced in the ages respectively wherein they liv'd: And so, though the more antient

tient Fathers Testimony is preferr'd before the more modern, because its formal witness is of a more nearness to Christ, and of longer durance towards us; yet, the greater learning of one, though in other points very considerable, in Doctrines of Faith has no value, provided the unlearned Father have enough to warrant his knowledg of the present practice and belief of Christians. But in reality, any Father, whose authority carries us beyond the apparent memory of man-kind, is as good as the best for declaring the Faith of the Church then present, which because it receiv'd its Doctrine by entail, every ages testimony, in such matters of fact, is firm and irrefragable.

To conclude therefore, The Catholic makes no difference of the Quality of Fathers, nor much of their Antiquity; but admits all, so they come with *Universality*: The Protestant, though he will a little simper at it, yet in conclusion, rejects all; setting his own judgment, which he calls Scripture, for high Umpire, of what in

them is right, what wrong. Therefore 'tis fruitless to dispute against a Protestant out of Antiquity, unless you first settle what proof he will admit. Neither is it easie for a Protestant to argue strongly against a Catholick out of the *Fathers*: For, if the Catholick will bind him to it, he must bring an Universality of them, or else there's no obligation to receive them; and how he will go about to do this, I understand not. I mean in a private disputation, where three or four Testimonies may easily be spun out to take up the whole time. People are generally willing to bestow on such a work. Nevertheless, the spruce yonkers are forward to cry, that all the *Fathers* are on their side; as their Patriarch *Jewel* began the quest to them, so shamefully, that his own Chaplain forsook him for his impudent falsehood.

But concerning this point, 'tis to be noted, that whereas they confessedly break from the universal face of Antiquity in all Church-practice, as in the *Liturgies, Litanies, Mass, Praying*



*Praying to Saints, Praying for the Dead, most of the Sacraments, Reliques, Altars, Pilgrimages, Fastings, Processions, Celibate of Priests, Religious Orders, and the generality of Church-Discipline: Yet have they so little ingenuity, as, before Women and ignorant Persons to aver themselves the only followers of Antiquity; and undertake to prove it by certain ends of Texts, concerning some special circumstance or nice point, in which they have found some dark place out of some Father.*

I put therefore this question to any judicious person, who is curious to hear disputes in Religion; whether, in so large a Book as the Scripture, it be possible, morally speaking, there should not be divers hard and obscure passages? And then, whether an eloquent Sophister may not make use of such places to circumvent and delude weak souls, unable to remember or mark the contrary Texts, and judge between them? These two being granted, which must not be deny'd by any that has read the 2 Pet. 3. 16.

I ask, what security he can have, that his Disputant is not such an one? And what I say of *Scripture*, is far truer of the works of *Fathers*, which are both more ample, and may have errors in them. So that all disputing out of Antiquity, is ~~is~~ but beating the ayre, unless the Parties be first agreed what *Fathers Authorities* are sufficient to conclude and terminate their differences.

However, you'll say, it cannot be deny'd but that he, who has studyed the *Fathers* so well, as to be able to make a ranged battail out of such obscure places against *Catholicks*, must be an able man; and therefore his Authority deserves to bear sway, and to carry credit among the unlearned sort. But I am not of that mind; for how poor a business is it to fall from the Authority of the Church, to the Authority of a private Doctor? again, to retire from the Authority of more, to the authority of few is not the part of unlearned; who, because they are not able to judg of the quality, ought to stick to the quantity.

But

BUT what is most considerable, is that: by all likelihood, this great Doctor, if he be young, has not read the Authors themselves, but at most, collected such places as he has found cited in others; which argues but a small *Modicum* of learning, though he make a great shew, like one who can recite three Verses of *Homer* in a Country School.

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## The Fifteenth Reflexion.

*On Arguments drawn from Reason,  
for Religion.*

THERE's left *Reason*, and the Arguments which issue from it. Now Religion is generally apprehended to be a knowledg above Nature, and deriv'd by Authority from a source of higher understanding than

ours : Yet on the other side it cannot be planted in us, otherwise then that the root of it must necessarily be in *Reason*, since Reason is our Nature. Now then, the root and *basis* of believing is manifestly from this, that we judg we ought to believe ; which is as much as, that 'tis reasonable we should believe : Wherefore, the Arguments from Reason chiefly to be mannaged in matter of Religion, should be in common, whether it be Reason to believe what is proposed ? And because none can doubt whether Reason obliges to believe what God proposes, the whole question is return'd upon this point, Whether Reason binds us to believe what the Church, or our Fore-fathers, deliver as the Doctrine which *Jesuu Christ* (whose Authority is above exception) taught and delivered to the World from his Eternal Father ? In which question, the Affirmative reasons belong only to Catholicks ; the Negatives to all others.

Here the Catholick-Disputant has two ways to proceed : One is, in a man-

ner, Metaphysical, and of a rigorous consequence; by shewing that this Principle of adhearing to our Forefathers Doctrine in the way the Church relies on, could not be taken up in any middle age, but must of necessity have been continu'd from the beginning; and that, if it has been continu'd from the beginning, no error can have crept in; which being done, 'tis as evidently demonstrated that *Catholick-Faith* is the sole *Christian-Faith*; as that the three Angles of a Triangle are equal to two right Angles, or any other Verity in *Euclide* or *Archimedes*.

The other way is, to assume to prudent moral men, that whoever sees such evidence for his Religion, as he has for venturing his Life, his Estate, his Honour, &c. cannot be excus'd, neither in Conscience nor Honour, if he does not embrace it. For, if he sees the same advantage in two cases, and in one will venture, in the other will not, he is manifestly unreasonable; and, what-ever he says to the contrary, may justly be suspected of making;

making no real and serious apprehension of the future life, and the goods of it, but that sense prevails in him above Reason. Now, that the Catholick Faith has all the advantages, upon which men adventure their Lives, Estates, and Honours, &c. will easily and clearly appear, if the right way be taken; the Authority of the Church being so far beyond all Witnesses used in Judgments, all probabilities in War, and Merchandizing, that there is no comparison betwixt them.

The Objections which Hereticks bring, are, for the most part Authorities of the nature we spoke of before: which, in such abundance of writings as are in Scripture and Fathers, cannot fail to be found by those that purposely seek them; being speeches delivered by the by, when they are attentive to some other question, or in circumstances not well known to us; in fine, difficulties such as, of necessity, cannot be avoided in much speaking, and neither convince the Authors mind,  
nor

nor much less the verity of the question debated.

The Arguments drawn from *Reason*, for proof or disproof of particular points, are chiefly in mysteries difficult in Nature, against which Hereticks frame the ordinary objections; as, against the holy *Trinity*, how the same thing can be one and three; against the *Incarnation*, how the same Person can be God and Man; and against the holy *Eucharist*, how Christ's body can be divided like an homogeneal body. And, such kind of Arguments are hard to be answered, Universally; because the Propounder and Auditory have not Philosophy enough to understand the solution, and sometimes the Answerer himself falls short; for, not every Catholick, nor yet every Catholick-Disputant is necessarily a great Philosopher; though, if he suspects his Adversaries subtilty, he ought either be provided, or abstain from disputing, or profess himself no Master in such speculations, and so wave them better with his own disparagement, then attempt them.

PRO *Controversy-Logick.*

them with the dishonour of the Cause.

In other points, generally, the Objections against Catholick-truths are very trivial; as, against the *Popes Authority*, that there cannot be more heads or foundations, and that Christ is one; against *satisfaction for sins*, that Christ satisfi'd sufficiently; against *Praying to Saints*, that there is but one Mediatour; or, that Saints have no Ears, and so cannot hear, and the like; which are pittiful Pulpit-babbles to fill the mouths of weak persons, who think, as soon as with one of these they have troubled some simple Creature, that themselves are fit to dispute with the Pope of *Rome*: Such toys may be found against any thing; and an exercis'd Disputant cannot be ignorant of the Answers, but easily weary of the employment, and asham'd of having let himself be drawn into it.

As for Arguments from Reason to prove Catholick-truths, they may be as strong as the Disputant is capable of. For, no Argument is so strong,



strong, but, if shot from a weak hand, may prove wholly blunt and impenetrant: So, must I leave the Catholick Disputant to his discretion in this part; as, not to engage, unless he be assured both, that his Dart is good, and that he has the dexterity to ayme it right. Out of this short survey of the nature of Arguments, the good Logician will easily see 'tis meer loss of-time to dispute with one, who is not able, or will not so much as profess to bring a Demonstration: being, indeed, to no more purpose, then the tossing of Balls in a Tennis-Court.

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## The Sixteenth Reflexion.

*On the Qualities besitting the Auditor at a Disputation.*

**Y**ET is there a farther consideration not to be neglected, concerning the *Auditory*; which is either favourable, or contrary, or indifferent. And, because these Qualities arise either out of the Understanding or the Will; we ought first to look into the Understanding, in which nothing but *incapacity* makes one unfit; and incapacity is either natural, or for want of study and art, or by Custom: that of Nature, is helpt by much explication; and so is that which proceeds from want of study: With this difference, that natural incapacity is taken away by explication  
of.

of the particular matter in hand ; which is tolerable, because it draws not the Disputation out of its own bounds : But, when the incapacity is for want of study, 'tis because the Disputation supposes some Principles, whereof the Auditory is ignorant; and these are of two kinds, the one Logical, the other Theological.

The first happens chiefly in the use of Disputation; as, if the Auditory be ignorant of the form, and so will have the Disputant play the Defendants part, or contrarily the Defendant act the Disputants; or desires that, instead of a rigorous form, they fall on discoursing or Preaching at large. Likewise, if the Auditory know not the use of distinction; and so either hinders the Defendant from distinguishing, or permits it him where there are not two senses in the words the Disputant uses, but, by adding words of his own, he seems to make two senses where there is but one. As if the Disputant should take, that 'tis the Nature of a Man to have two Leggs; and the Answerer should distinguish,

stinguish, saying 'tis truly the Nature of white Men, but not of black Men; or, the Nature of *Europeans*, but not of *Africans*: Here the Disputant is wronged; for taking his rise from this, that to have two Leggs, is the Nature of a Man, he might prove it were the Nature of *Africans*, because they are Men: Now for want of Logick in the Respondent, and the Auditory, he is not permitted to take the Nature of Man in common; but must take the Nature of an *African*, and so is put besides his Argument.

The other Ignorance, is of some Theological point, which is besides the matter; so the question is drawn to another business, and the Auditory remains unsatisfi'd and discontented, thinking 'tis the Disputants fault, whereas 'tis their own.

The third Incapacity, is by Custom: & this likewise is two-fold; one general, the other particular: the general is, when the Auditory has been used to slight discourses in matter of Studies; and so never bend themselves to penetrate deeply into the proposed

posed question, but take their resolution by fancy, who speaks well, who not. The particular is, when the Auditory is meanly versed in the question it self, and used to hear certain terms for the final solution of it; to which when the Disputant is arrived, they take it for granted that all is said that can be said, and never consider whether the solution be solid, or the reply upon it efficacious or no. This incapacity is proper to half-witted persons, and to the science which is called *Inflans*; that is, a portion great enough to make one talk and think himself wise, but not able to make him know any thing.

From the *Will*, spring more formally those imperfections which make the Auditory unfit to assist at a Disputation. Let the first be a Vanity or secret Pride; through which, some come not to see the truth of the thing in question, for in that they suppose themselves perfect, as thinking they know more than any other can produce, esteeming all knowledge to be but flashes of wit; and therefore

fore they come either for pastime; or to censure; not with a desire to improve themselves in any truth. To these good must come of Disputation against their wills, if any can; for none they seek.

There is another sort faulty by the contrary disposition; for, they are so diffident of themselves, they dare not judg of any thing; and, which is worse, though possibly they know it not, have their Opinions absolutely tyed, either to the credit or eloquence of some particular person whom they passionately esteem. Now, 'tis lost labour to dispute for their sakes, who dare not trust themselves to see the evidence of what you say, but either afterwards confer with the Adversary about it; and have not an equal recourse to you, or will not hear you speak, unless they have some-body by, to blot out the notions you seek to imprint in their understandings, before they can settle in them. So that, evidently, 'tis in vain to cast your Seed into such an High-way, where the Birds of the ayre are continually picking

picking it up before it can take root.

A third, and that the most universal wilfulness of the Auditory consists in some affection or interest, which he that has it, either cannot or does not see. Some have fear of their Friends or Parents, some of Wife or familiar Acquaintance, some of Persecution; some have pretences of rising, some of Marrying themselves or their Children; some have an esteem of other persons, either for their Learning or Wisdom; every one somewhat or other: Yet ask them, and they are ready to protest that, were the truth evident to them, they would value none of all these things more than the dirt under their shoes. And God forbid I should think they counterfeit; for you may often perceive tokens that truly they think what they say, and deceive themselves more than they do others. But, which is worst, they never suspect that these Interests prevent their seeing the truth, and hinder them from penetrating and sticking

to what they hear, and begin weakly to apprehend.

Out of all that has been said, it will follow that *Disputation* is seldom the means to advance in the truth of Religion. For, placing for your foundation, that Disputes in Religion between contrary parties are not to be instituted, but in order to find out the Truth; you presently discern all such Arguments ought to be excluded as pretend not certainty, or else Religion is not to be taken for a speculative Truth.

This being done, Disputation is, in a manner, cut off. All your Grammatical arguments are quite taken away, and laid aside; as a laudable exercise for Boys, but unworthy grave Men: All such arguments as are called *probable*, are likewise banisht the Lists; which two being taken away, little remains worth the noise of Disputation.

Again, You must seek an Auditor capable to be judg of the true form and laws of Disputation, ~~on~~ what is pertinacy, what well reply'd; as also

to



to moderate the heat of the Actors. Now, such an one where shall we seek? The Auditors, therefore, should not be above two or three, or a very small company: it being too hard a task to find many so qualify'd as is necessary for such an action; nor, if they were, would they easily conspire to the right governing it; some understanding things one way, some another.

To these two add the third, relating to the matter of Disputation; which, by no means, ought to extend it self beyond such points as are necessary to be held: Though, indeed, this caution is purely for Catholicks; all others being free to what-ever they can defend uncontradictory to Scripture; so that, being bound to maintain almost nothing at all, they have little occasion to dispute, but only for the unsettling others; especially Catholicks, who alone have a steady and constant rule, and a necessity of standing to a known Doctrine. Now, if Catholicks held themselves to *tenets* purely necessary, they

they would generally disappoint the large Objections of their Adversaries.

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## The Seventeenth Reflexion.

*On what is the best manner to find the truth of Religion by Conference.*

**B**UT, to approach to a Conclusion. If *Disputation* carry in it such difficulties that it can scarce ever be either necessary or profitable, and the business of converting others to the true Religion so important and perpetual; what is the best course to deal with such as go astray, that we may draw them into the path of Salvation? The Answer is not hard: For, either the fault is in their Will, or their Understanding: If in the Will, you

you must consider what are the particular obstructions ; whether some love of temporalities, or meer tepidity. Of the former, the common remedies are often and seriously to inculcate the Vanities of this World, and what will become of us in the next ? Tepidity proceeds either from want of acquaintance, with the affairs of Religion, and the next life, or out of a dulness of Nature : The first is to be cured by leading the person into good Companies, where he may often hear such spiritual matters handled and discussed, whether by Sermons, Discourses, or Conferences, till the fire, as it were, light of it self, and break into a quick flame : The second is principally to be rooted out with fears ; as, by frequent commemoration of Death and Hell - fire ; and without this nothing will be done, especially if the dulness be so harsh and stupid that allurements have little force upon it.

If the fault be in the Understanding, as because the motives of true Christianity sink not deep enough in-

to his soul: And therefore experience and reason teaching us that the soul judges best when 'tis most calm and quiet; you are to draw your Patient, what you can, into a kind of solitude; that is, to chuse the seasons when least turmoile either of business or pleasures infest him: Procuring also, that there be no Adversary to hinder your reason from taking root: For, he who will hear nothing but in opposition, shall never, or very slowly come to understand the truth. Being like a Cistern, into which the water runs by a spout at one end, and emptyes it self as fast by a hole at the other: So, if as soon as we make a proposition or short discourse to demonstrate the verity propounded, there be another at his elbow to cross it, or raise difficulties before it be apprehended; his ears may hear, but his understanding shall never come to know what is said to him: He may perhaps get a glimpse of the truth discours'd on; but like a flying Vision, it permits not the judgment to work upon it.

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Let him, therefore, deliberately weigh with himself, that *Religion* is the most severe business we have in our lives; that it has many propositions or parts: That every one requires a quiet and settled judgment of it self: That this judgment cannot be made but in a calm and serene posture of his brain; how then is it possible in a wrangling of two Adversaries, where sayings slide by with a great violence, and multiply themselves before any one can be quietly possess'd; He can perform that duty of Assent which is required in so grave a concernment.

What then? Must he not hear oppositions, and the conflict of both parties? Yes, by all means: But the first thing necessary, is to make himself Master of what one part says; and when he finds himself able to propose his difficulty to the bottom, then, in God's name, to encounter the Adverse party. For, when they are only two, and rational, it will not be hard to penetrate so far, as to see whether the adverse party can give sa-

tisfaction to the Argument you make or no : If he can , there ought no change to be made, where both sides are equal : If he cannot, then 'tis apparent on which side the truth lyes ; as far as may be found by the learning of these two. So that this alone is the solid way of arriving to the truth in Religion : To converse first with one, after with the other ; with both as much without passion as is possible ; but never to bring them to conflict together, when both animosity and shame of being overcome shall debauch their endeavours, and their quick replies, and many *ambages* shall leave the Auditour impotent to judg of the discourse , if there be no other impertinent occasions to obscure and hinder the clear light of the truth.

## The Eighteenth Reflexion.

*On what is Learning, and how mistaken.*

**I** Find still remaining a disadvantage to the Disputant on either side; which, if possible, I must strive to remove. 'Tis a certain Preposition, settled in the heart of the Auditory, or him that is to be persuaded of the Learning and Goodness of some private Person or Doctor, upon whose Authority truly depends the belief of the party, though he pretends the Authority, perhaps of Scripture, Fathers, or some other rule for his assent. This, enforc'd by Custome, (as impetuous a cause, almost, as nature it self), lyes like a great load upon the heart of him, who has a long time, either by his own judgment, or the constant

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cry of his Neighbours, and those with whom he has convers'd, redoubled and fix'd in himself a deep apprehension of the ability and honesty of a Person, as he esteems, well known and understood: Wherefore I shall here add some little marks, or rather distinctions of Learnings, to hinder men from missing in their judgments.

And first; I must note that there are divers sorts of *Learning*; and that he who has one must not, therefore, of necessity be excellent in another. *Geometry, Physick, Law, Philosophy, Metaphysick, and Divinity,* are all different Sciences; all so independent on one another, that who is excellent in one way, have but a small share in any of the rest: And nevertheless, I see, that if one has any of these in such a measure as to deserve reputation, the common sort of people think he knows all things, and will come to him for remedies quite of another Science; esteeming all Learning but one, because the name is but one. Nor is this proper to the pure Vulgar, but ev'n they of better rank often.



often mistake the true kind of Learning which is to their purpose; expecting it in him who has somewhat like it, as will appear by farther discourse.

The next observation, then, we have to make, is, that not every thing which is taken for *Learning* is truly such; though it be a quality commendable, and such as, peradventure, should be found only in the Learned; how ever others sometimes acquire it, and thereby get the opinion of great Schollars. And first, in this kind, is the knowledg of *Languages*, which are fitly dividable into two sorts, *Vulgar* and *Learned*. The *Vulgar* ordinarily imports that such a Language is spoken naturally in some Country, and is proper to that People, or some part of it. That Language is taken to be *Learned*, which is generally deriv'd out of Books, and has Grammars and Dictionaries to be study'd by. Though, to say the truth, this term, *Learned Language*, has a higher signification, that 'tis such as is necessary to the attainment

Learning, or, in which Learning was or is delivered. For, *Learning*, generally being brought into our Northern Climats from the more-Eastern, and being first written in Oriental Languages, they have gotten the Pre-rogative to be esteem'd the Learned ones. First, The *Latin* came out of *Italy*, then *Greek*, then *Hebrew*, and consequently *Arabick*, *Syriack*, *Chaldaick*, ev'n *Persian* and *Coptick*, and the *Abyssin*; though the principal ones are the three first, in which *Divinity*, the chief of Sciences, is originally deliver'd to us.

Whence 'tis clear, not the knowledge of these Languages, but of the things deliver'd in them, is true Learning; to which the Languages are only instrumental. So that, to speak understandingly, as we account not him Learned, who is expert in *French*, *Spanish*, and *Italian*, (our modern affected Languages), but rather a well qualifi'd or fine Gentleman: So should we say of him who is skilful in the Oriental Tongues; that, by such excellency, he deserves

not

not the title of Learned, but of one singularly qualifi'd, or a *Vertuoso* (as the *Italians* call it); accounting this quality with Musick, Dancing, Fencing, and such other innocent employments of unbusied persons. Yet, because they are, as it were, a step to Learning, and belong to Schollars, they have a higher rank then those other inferiour exercises, both in themselves, and in the claim to the notion of Learning.

This mistake of the term *Learning*, in applying it to the knowledg of words, is of so great consequence, that it forces me to look farther into the nature of Learning. *Learning*, therefore, is accounted to be that which *teaching* makes: And a *Teacher* is a Master and Instructour: And because both these are actions proper to men, he is a true Instructour who teaches those things which belong to Man as Man; that is, such as make him more Man, or perfecter in the Nature of Man; that is, those on which depends the government of himself. Now 'tis plain, this first;

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and chiefly depends on *Divinity* amongst Christians, on *Metaphysicks* and *Morals* in the way of pure Nature: Next, on the knowledg of the World, which *Physicks* or natural Philosophy deliver, and to this *Arithmetick* and *Geometry* are necessary; though, besides, they seem a part of informing our soul in Nature, *Quantity* being the highest condition of Natural things. After these, the notion of Learning is deriv'd to *Medecine* or *Physick*, by which we govern our Bodies. Lastly and weakliest, to *Law*, by which we govern our Fortunes, which our disordinate affections make necessary to us, and in a manner, part of the government of our selves. These, then, and these only, make a Learned Man: What is called *Learning* besides these, is by mistake of the name, being not knowledges of governing Man as Man, but only in some accidental action or circumstance. Not that I will quarrel about the use of the word; but I seek to prevent the abuse of the things arising from its Equivocation. For, it

imports not how the name is used, as being at the will of the Speakers; but it imports that the well-meaning Auditor be not abus'd, by mistaking that for real Learning which is not so, nor can avail him for his pretended end and improvement. Let this then be concluded, that no knowledg of words deserves the title of Learning, but only the knowledg of things, and those such as belong to the government of Mans life.

There's another quality which more seemingly, though peradventure not with so good ground, pretends to this honourable appellation: And 'tis a faculty of talking of those things which true Sciences profess and teach. And because true teaching consists in a verbal, and chiefly oral delivery of the Teachers mind; this has a great pretence, and a strange force amongst those who are incapable of discerning the matter it self, to persuade them such Talkers are the solidest Schollars in the World. He needs a strong judgment that will be able to avoid the snares these men can lay; the knots.

knots of their Equivocations are so close, the thred of their Discourse so subtle, the smoothness of their words, and the well-plac'd Patheticks so penetrant, that no ordinary Auditor can escape them : He must be either truly Learned, or extream cautious to cope safely with such a Gamester.

And yet, as I said before, this plausible speaking has not so strong a claim to Learning as the *Grammarian*, against whom we last discoursed. For, the *Grammarian* really knows what he professes : This man, after he has made a discourse of an hour long, after he has wholly persuaded you ; if you have access not only to the Closet of his Body, but into the Cabinet of his Soul ; that is, if he will ingenuously disclose his heart, hee'll tell you that he knows not whether what he said, was true or no ; but at the most, that 'tis the likeliest to be true of any thing he knows.

Some ages past, there was in one of our Universities, a Man, who having made a long speech in defence of Christian Religion, with so great applause,

plause; that all his Auditory was ravish'd and fully satisfi'd; through excess of Vanity broke out into that Blasphemy, to say publickly, *Little Jesus, How much art thou beholding to me? for, if I would have spoken against thee, how far more efficaciously could I have declaimed?* The story says, he was suddenly stricken with such a loss of memory, that he was fain to learn to read of new. Deservedly he: But what I deduce from hence is, First, that his Reasons, though not in his judgment efficacious, yet convinc'd the whole Auditory, and that of no common persons. By which, we understand, the reasons he brought, were not Demonstrations; nor the best that could have been alleadg'd for that subject, else better could not have been oppos'd; and yet they carry'd so great an Auditory: The force therefore, of this art of Talking, must necessarily have a violent power on the ordinary sort of hearers, to make them take their Master for a Doctor.

Another Note I make, is, that all the talking of such men is not, or ought not to be sufficient to persuade us, not only that they speak the truth, but ev'n that they speak their own minds; but either what the times bear, or their own Interest, or to please the Auditors. Fully professes the same of his Oratours, and to have practic'd it himself. But I cannot omit the story of that expert General and Understanding Man *Hanibal* the *Carthaginian*: To whom *Antiochus*, having furnisht a mighty Fleet, and flourishing Army, not contented with that, presented an Oration of the manner of the War, made by a famous, and now ancient Orator, *Phormio*; who in the presence of *Antiochus* and his Captains, discours'd to the great applause and admiration of them all: But *Hanibal* being ask'd, answered, that in his life he had never met with such an old dotardly Fool. A strange censure, you would think, on a Man so generally cryed up: But if we consider that *Phormio* had learnt his skil of war,



warfare in written Discourses and Historyes, but *Hanibal* in the Field and action it self; we may easily see that *Phormio's* Oration talk'd of *Chymras* in the air, and fram'd his Adversary in his fancy; but *Hanibal* had studyed the things in themselves, and so knew what he spake, & saw all that glorious Oration to be but a painted Pageant, not any effectual exhibition of Truth.

Out of this, 'tis beyond all dispute, that unless juggling and folly may be accounted Learning, to be able to discourse in high and subtle terms is no sure argument of Learning in him that exercises it. Who were greater Talkers, or better Discourfers then the *Academicks*? Yet their profession was, that they had no truth; nor, indeed, that there was any such thing to be found.

## The Nineteenth Reflexion.

*On, what Divinity is, and who is  
a Divine.*

**L** Et us now apply the Notions we have mention'd above to our modern *Sectaries*, and all such as reject, the only sure Rule of Faith, *Tradition*; to whom particularly we address this present Discourse. *Religion*, we said, is the most important and necessary business belonging to mans Nature and action: Then, that *Religion* is precisely one; wherein no mistake can be without danger and ruine: but as, who misses his way, comes not to his journeys end, whether it be his fault or no; so who hits not the true path of Religion, never arrives at eternal happiness; let the fault be where it will. These being

ing so, if Learning in Religion be the skill of shewing the path to Heaven; and all the great noise these Fathers make, helps never a step towards that, as not delivering any point of truth that may be certainly rely'd on; clearly, they are much farther from the notion of *Learning*, than the *Grammarians* we speak of before. For, his was low and contemptible, indeed, as being only of words; yet, of them at least he had a knowledg: whereas, this prating, this *Parrat* Vertue, though it be of things, yet is not a Science, but pure words and wind.

I hear them (as they want neither words nor boldness to dispute against the clearest evidence) reply, that they promise no certainty, because none can be: but, they hold forth a high *probability*, which is the Princess that governs humane affairs. Neither will I, at this present, discuss whether there is any certainty: 'tis enough that the Catholick Church both doth, and ever hath profess'd a certainty; and Nature forces  
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ev'n the denyers of this truth to act as if they had certainty in perswading and forcing others to their opinions. But, I wish they would learn to speak plain *English*; and, in lieu of this quaint term, *high probability*, tell us the meaning in words honest men might understand. Let me see what *I* can help them. That they mean by *probability*, either is some access to truth on the Objects de; or, a great perswasion made in the Auditour. If the last, it clearly signifies no other than a high cheat or excellent juggle.

Now, supposing there be no fixedness or certainty of the Object, by all the Arguments of this high Oratour: *I* cannot understand that there is more in all he says, then perhaps 'tis true, perhaps otherwise. So that *high probability* signifies but only a *peradventure*, though never so high: which how great a Non-sence 'tis, if apply'd to fixed Verities which are no way subject to mutability and chance; that is, how ridiculously 'tis apply'd to Religion and Truths of Faith, no sensible man can be ignorant. If, now,  
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men will needs have one term'd a *Divine*, because he can talk finely *pro* and *con*, of God, and things belonging to him; he must be one of blind *Tiresias's* Tribe, who, by the mouth of the Poet, professes his *Divinity* in these terms, *O Laertiade! quicquid dicam aut erit aut non, Divinare etenim magnus mihi donat Apollo.*

The last part of the reply puts us in mind that *Probability* governs all humane action. Neither will or can I deny it: But I take notice, that *action* is one thing, *belief* another. *Action* is about the gaining of an end to come, that depends on fallible principles, as almost all things do; being still involv'd in a thousand uncertainties and changes: *Faith* is of unchangable Verities, which nothing has power to make otherwise than 'tis already settled. 'Tis parallel to Science, truly so call'd, which we see in Geometry practic'd; for which no body looks into probabilities: And, it can be no less ridiculous to expect Faith should depend on probabilities, than Geometry; since 'tis  
more

more necessary, and the path of Heaven is miss'd with greater danger and loss; Therefore 'tis a folly to cast it upon the Dice, or not to expect it as certain and easie to arrive at, as Geometry it self.

Were it not strange there should be certain and infallible rules to measure Lines and Angles, and no certain course to secure ones eternal happiness, and avoid endless misery, then to venture it at Hazard, or play it at Cross and Pile; for his Condition is little better, who takes his Faith and Religion upon the recommends of probability.

But, the affection once engaged, makes the Ears slow to understand any thing spoken to the contrary. Therefore the complaint is redoubled: What? can we think one, who has spent thirty or forty years so well, may after all, be accounted unlearned? I dare scarce reply what is fitting: Yet, with pardon, I counter-demand of them, Whether if any one had spent thirty or forty years in gathering Raggs to furnish the Paper-Mills,

Mills, or had cry'd Card-matches as long; must he of necessity be thought worth a thousand pound a year, at the end of his labour, though none could except either against his diligence in getting, or frugality in conserving what he gained? So, he that will judg aright of a Schollar, must not only count the years of his study, nor the pains and industry he has imploy'd; but also take notice in what all this was bestow'd. For, if it were only apply'd, to seek out the proprieties of *Latine* or *Greek* words; if only in Criticisms, whether of Grammar or History: 'twill avail no more towards the attainment of *Learning*, then the selling of Card-matches is to the purchase of a thousand pounds a year.

Yet may some think this exception unlawful in our present case: For, the man here spoken of, is supposed to have spent his age, not in trifling Books only, but much of it in the holy Scriptures and Fathers; where, by our own confession, true knowledg may be gained; therefore, he cannot be

be suspected of Ignorance or want of Learning. Nevertheless, ev'n this objection moves not my resolution; but that *I* must take a new information, of what he look'd for in those excellent Books. The Kings of *Narsinga* and *Pegu* are reported, in their prosperities, to have heaped up such vast Treasures, both of precious Metals and Jewels, that they were forc'd to let them lye in great Courts, Chambers being not able to contain them; the successors ever vying to out-do his Predecessour: *I* ask them, if a Dunghil-Cock had been turn'd into these Courts, how much richer he would have come out? Nothing at all; because he look'd not there for the heaps of Gold and Diamants, but some grains of Wheat and Barly, fit for his Stomack. Some of our Gallants who, visiting *Paris* or *Rome*, seek after nothing but where the best Taverns and entertainments are; may we hope, when they come back, they will be able to give a good account of the Towns and Countrys they have travelled in? So, if our great Students



dents look into the Scriptures and Fathers, for what a *Merret*, or *Corn*, or *Ephe* is, or, in fine, sift out Genealogies, or Chronologies, or other Curiosities; and spend their forty years in such pidling *Divinity*: Will they, at the end, be any nearer the true quality of *Divines*, then when they began?

Besides, though they seek for true knowledge, yet, if they take not the right way, 'tis impossible they should ever come at it. As those Pictures, which are contriv'd by the ingeniousness of *Mathematicians*, whether to be seen through a glass, or purely by chusing a certain position, require to be look'd on in one determinate site: So is the nature of all words and their Objects; as far as the truths are dependent from the cloathing of the words. There is a degree of attention belonging to them; which, if too little, the words are not understood; if too great, that which before was clear, becomes dim by equivocations of words and their constructions; and the more you look without passion, the

the more changable is their aspect, and you the less certain : Whereas, with *Reason* 'tis quite contrary : A Demonstration, the more impartially 'tis consider'd, the more sure and evident it appears. So that, where Reason and the nature of words, each severally pois'd, do both concur to favour such an explication; the words will be better understood by Arguments from Reason, then the sense and reason from the words : And when ever it happens that the sense and reason is certain, but the Text or Letter Ambiguous; 'tis evident the latter ought to yield and be govern'd by the former.

They, therefore, who, in matter of Religion, know the truths by some other way, not depending on a certain form of words, have an extream advantage, in the explication of Scripture; over those who do but, as it were, shake the words together like Lotts in a bagg : Which is necessary, where there's nothing but ~~the~~ pure letter of Scripture to rely on for the true meaning of it. It is not, then,  
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the number of years one has turn'd or'e the Bible, or Greek and Latin Authours, which can justifie him to be a great Divine: but there must be also consider'd what he sought, and in what method, and how impartially; which, of it self, has a huge stroke in making one understand writings truly or erroneously.

And here comes into my mind a Truth, which peradventure may seem paradoxical; yet is, in it self, most evident: That a Boy, who can neither write nor read, may be a greater *Divine* than one who has study'd Scripture his forty years. Which who desires to see clearly, let him remember, *Divinity* has for its end the knowledg of those truths, which are to guide us to our Salvation: a knowledg so necessary, that no ignorance can hinder our perishing eternally; and consequently, ought to be certain as any Demonstration. Again, that forty years study may be employ'd without arriving, by the force of such study, to Demonstration sufficient to assure a man of all points

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necessary: as, the hundred years debate betwixt Catholicks and Protestants, without being one foot farther advanc'd then at the first day, doth amply manifest. The conclusion, therefore, is evident on this side, that the forty years study does not necessarily make a *Divine*.

Let us consider, on the other side, a Child of a dozen years old, never put to School farther then, in the Church, to be taught, in a Catechistical way, the sum of Christian Doctrine; and to know 'tis to be held because 'tis descended from Christ, by the perpetual handing it from age to age, in the whole *Catholick Church*. Let's see whether this Child be a *Divine* or no. If the question be of the matter, he knows what is sufficient for him to bring him to Heaven, viz. enough to breed in him the love of God, and an Obedience to the Church, ordain'd by God for this end, to direct us in doing our duties for the attainment of eternal Salvation. Again, he has a ground for his belief, more certain then any Demonstration in *Euclide* or

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*Archimedes.* Why then has not this Boy all that's necessary to the being a *Divine*, and more then the long-studied pretender to *Divinity* can shew for himself? One may say he penetrates not the force of succession. But whether that be true or false, this is certain, he holds it upon that rule and principle: And, if we seek to bind a Science or certitude to understand thoroughly all its Principles; we must take away all Sciences but *Metaphysicks*, and blot out of *Logick* the distinction of Sciences *Subalternative* and *Subalterned*; and deny *Geometry* and *Arithmetick* to be Sciences, because the most of Mathematicians do not understand nor teach the force of those *Maxims*, by which a *Syllogism* compels our assent.

Peradventure, it may be reply'd, that *Divinity* properly signifies a Science drawn out of Articles of Faith, either alone or joyn'd with certainties of Philosophy: and, that this Boy cannot pretend to such a Science. I Answer, rigorously speaking in the use of the School, *Theology* or *Divinity*

nity signifies such a quality ; but in ancient Writers 'tis taken for the knowledg of Faith also ; when we speak of a Boys being a *Divine*, we speak of the latter. Nevertheless, if the comparison be made in this properly Science of *Divinity*, the Boy is the nearer to that which neither has : For, as, who knows ne're a Demonstration in *Euclide* cannot be call'd a Geometrician, though he has learnt the Axioms and *Postulata*, and Definitions ; so, he that only knows Faith is no *Divine* ; that is, neither of the two compar'd are, indeed, worthy that Name, since neither of them is got beyond the first principles, and one of them is not assur'd so far : Yet is there this difference between them, that, as he who acknowledges the Definitions and other truths prerequisite, is nearer being a Geometrician than he who doubts of them ; so, the Boy who believes all those Articles of Christian Faith, which he already knows, and has the Rule whereby to be certain of any other when they are propos'd to him, approaches nearer the quality of

of a *Divine*, then he who calls himself one, because, forty years together, he has doubted and disputed of the Principles of *Divinity*, which must be agreed to before *Divinity* it self can be so much as commenced. Whereby may easily be understood, how great a cheat and imposture is put on the well-meaning people, when such Teachers are term'd *Divines*, and pass for Doctors; who truly are but Sophisters and wranglers in that holy Science.

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## The Twentieth Reflexion.

*Of the Civilities to be used in treating Controversies.*

**N**othing will allay an once-rays'd Passion : One Objection cannot be so soon quell'd, as another boyls up and breaks forth. The same men, therefore, press that, be their Masters Learned or Ignorant, however they are good moral men, to whom Civility at the least is due, and they are to be treated with honour and respect. Far be it from me to deny it: for *Civility* is a duty amongst men, upon the score of Man-hood, not any spiritual account; and therefore every one, who makes not himself unworthy, is the object of it. But, lest, out of the equivocation of gene-



general sayings, there come danger in particular; 'tis fit we should a little unfold the common Axiome.

The name, therefore, of *Civility*, comes from that of a *City*; because, both first, and for the most part, the sweetness of behaviour express'd in this term is seen and practic'd in Cities. It extends it self no farther then conversation: Those Vertues; which bear a man to goodness of more serious consequence, purchasing themselves also more ennobled denominations. It consists of two parts; one Negative, to prevent offence; the other Positive, to afford contentment. It dwells, as most Vertues do, betwixt two Vices; being infested with *Rudeness* below, and *Flattery* above. Its matter is both Action and Words: In action, Rusticity is boisterous; in words offensive: Adulation in action is apish with cringes and doppings; in words hyperbolical and lying. Civility declines offence, and is prompt to any convenient service: In words, as far as it can, it takes no notice of others defects, and gives the

true poise to their perfections: For, so God and Nature have order'd humane actions, that very few are without something worth reprehending, and none can altogether want whereof to be commended: So that, 'tis in the power of a prudent Man to praise or discommend any action; and much more any Person, to whom a great variety of actions and qualities must necessarily appertain. *Prudence*, therefore, ought to govern *Civility*, as it does other Vertues; and instruct when and how far, in particular circumstances, as Action is to be blamed or commended: The like is of the *Actions* of *Civility*; which fall into excess or defect, unless the bridle of *Prudence* guide them to march in the straight middle path. By which, 'tis apparent to the discreet Reader, that the moderation of *Civility* is a task hard enough to describe; and many times disputable on both sides, how far the duty of it obliges.

To apply this Doctrine to our particular case, we must add one little Note; That the *Civility* exhibited  
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may be, in respect of the present action, or quality, out of which the action formally is considered; or else in respect of some other quality of the same Person. To speak more clearly. The Catholick, who writes or disputes against a Protestant, may defer to him, either in his very Argument, or in other things not concerning it: As, he may acknowledg him eloquent, a good Linguist, a subtile Critick, or some other commendation pertaining to either Understanding or Will; or else, that his Argument is good, or hard to be solv'd, or that his skill in Divinity is extraordinary, or the like. Now, 'tis clear, this latter cannot well be done, without prejudice to the cause the Catholick maintains; and, therefore, ev'n if it should prove true, which seldom happens, it were by Prudence to be dissembled, as far as truth and ingenuity will permit: It seldom happens, I say; for, Protestant Arguments out of Authority are easily Answer'd; and, if some drawn from Reason be intricate, 'tis because that Nature, upon

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which the question depends, is obscure and unknown, not because the Ecclesiastical part has special difficulty in it.

What the pitch of Divinity, they can arrive to, is, we have already declared. For other qualities, both Nature requires we should give them a friendly esteem of their good parts, and the very intention of changing their judgments makes it no small part of our business, to proceed with a just deference towards them; if we consider how far the Will confers to incline the Understanding, and what a great power Courtesy has over the Will. As for the Arguments themselves, 'tis necessary (specially in writing, which admits a descent to particulars) to shew they are slight, and proceed out of ignorance, and discover a great distortion in the Will, which makes them accepted of; and the like: 'Tis necessary to manifest that the producer of such Arguments is not a Man to be relied on, nor has those qualities requisite in a Teacher; for either his Brain is weak,  
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or the obstinacy of maintaining an ill cause forces him to advance trivial and false cavils instead of strong and solid objections; which is the worse condition of the two: And who can justly give the commendation of honesty to one that, for his own honour or interest, will maintain a known falsity; especially in a subject on which depends the eternal Salvation or Damnation of the hearer? Were it not better he cheated me of my Purse? Rob'd me of my Credit? nay, brought my body to the Gallows, then plung'd my Soul into the hazard of perpetual and insufferable misery? How then can he that does this be esteem'd an honest man, and worthy of such civil testimony; as shall enable him more dangerously to ensnare poor souls?

He may, peradventure, think to defend all the mischief he does, by saying, If he seduces others, he is first seduc'd himself; and so Ignorance excuses him, at least, from being malicious and wicked. But, he mend his cause very little by this plea ::

plea: Since, he that undertakes to be a Master, especially in matters of so great consequence and hazard, must not be admitted to alledg ignorance for excuse: For, why does he undergoe the office of a Teacher, if he be unskilful? Such presumption more aggravates than ignorance can diminish his crime. He that will affirm things, must know them; else, to speak freely he is a Lye; and, if it be in a matter of high prejudice, a pernicious Knave. Perhaps, he will again answer for himself, that there is no means to come to certainty in Religion: Wherein, first, he Blasphemes against God; as not having provided Man-kind of the thing most necessary to them: Secondly, he proceeds very rashly; for, what Demonstration can he make, that he knows all can be said to the contrary? Thirdly, he knows, without the least doubt, that, either himself, or his Predecessours left the way they were bred in; if it were but for likelihoods, and that there be no certainty, how was it justifiably done by the first that

that began the breach, or by him who maintains it only upon peradventures?



## An Abridgment of the whole Discourse.

**T**His task being brought towards its upshot, it seems not amiss to set at one view, before the Readers Eye, the Nature of *Religion*, and how grossly it is abused by many who treat of it, that in a little Model, the scope of all we have hitherto said, may work the stronger upon his mind. Then who reflecteth upon the former discourse will easily remember, that *Religion* is nothing but the art and skill of so living in this world, as to come to happiness in the next, where it will endure for ever. Now this Eternal blis being the sole and whole End, for which God made us,  
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this way can be nothing but a co-natural way, by which mans Nature (conformably to its own parts and complexion) is raised by its own operations in this world to be capable of this Bliss, or sight of God in the next. Whence it plainly follows, that as Nature is one and the same in all men, and all our ways and arts to do any thing, are each but one in proportion to the thing done; so must Religion be but one, seeing it is to carry one Nature to one Bliss. It is likewise evident, that as mans Nature goes by a certainty in all its works in common, though in particular it be often conjectural. (As the Shoomaker hath certain rules to make a Shoo, the Taylor a Garment, the Cook a dish of Meat, the Mason a House, the Marriner a Voyage, the Physician a Cure, and so in all Trades, though they miss sometimes in particular; which if they did for the most part, no body would use them): So and with much stronger reason and necessity must it have a certainty in this part, that is, in Religion; or else

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its maker, like an evil Poet, had failed in the last and chiefest Act of his Play; and like an evil Artificer, missed of that part of his work, for which all the rest was framed. But God was so careful not to be subject to this reprehension, that by the consent of all Christians, he would not trust this part of his Work to Angels nor Men, but delivered his Law himself, by his own Mouth to Christians. So that it is plain, He meant not to leave it to be studyed or looked out, but to be accepted and received in such form as he delivered it. Therefore it is evident, Religion now is a thing to be practised, not to be hunted after; whose way should be so plain, that no Fool, nor Child could err in it. And truly, if it be (as evidently it is) to comprehend all our Actions, it must be learned before our Actions; that is, before the very first, in which we begin to govern our selves. Impossible therefore to come aworthily and sittingly to its End, otherwise than with our Mothers and Nurses Milk; that is, from  
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Fathers to Children; and so to be as co-natural to us as all those maximes of temporal Life and Conversation, which we learn by living among men that practise them. And had that happy state of Paradise endured, without question it had been as well known, as those Arts which are failing in no indifferently civilized Nation: And in this state we are in, we are to endeavour to bring it as near that proportion as we are able.

This unquestionably is what should be, and is desirable to be in Religion. But because our negligence and disesteem of this main Good, hath permitted so great an ignorance of so plain truths, and an humour of disputing and quarrelling about the most evident, and certain, and necessary Rule of our life, to break into a great part of Christendom: Let us look what remedy now is to be brought for such evils as daily rather encrease, than diminish in the Christian world. And no doubt, but since Scripture was written by the same Spirit which informed the Apostles tongues, no doubt

doubt, I say, but the due reading of it, is able to give us the true light we seek after, by expressing the greatest points, and directing us where to find the rest. Yet not every one is fit to read the Scripture to this intent; but he who will profit by his own reading, must both have a simple intention to be governed by what he finds, and wary not to think he finds what is not there. Therefore he must be ware of coming preoccupied by any fore-instructions which may byass his understanding; and also look strictly to the words, not to change them, not to add to them, not to seek to explicate them by what is not expressly in the Book. By which it will be easily conceived that this task requireth a very considerate and wise man. As this is the force of Scripture, so much more of the Holy Fathers writings, in which Christian duty is far more plain, their works being of a far greater extent; but likewise it requireth more leisure than most men have, to go thorough so large an enterprise. Some are of a mind, that by hearing

a conference, or disputation betwixt two of contrary Opinions in Religion, they are presently to become Masters of all that either in Scripture, or Fathers, concerns Religion, or at least that point whereof the Disputation is, which is a very silly conceit. For neither can we be assured of the worth of the Disputants, nor of the choice of their Arguments: But we may be assured that they handle not the tenth or hundredth part of what may be brought. Again, how efficaciously they do it, dependeth of many varieties and chances, and is for the most part, almost purely of hazard, one word divers times changing the whole tenour of the conference. The eloquence, the fervour, the outward shew of some wit or paper-learning, a mistake in Logick, and divers such by-les, flubber and deface the strongest reason and force of truth. Now what Auditory is fit for a Disputation? It must have no prevention; it must be skilled in the matters handled, it must be so attentive, that the running of the discourse doth  
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not let great senses glide unawares by it; in fine, such an one as is hard to be found: So that in truth it is generally unprofitable and useless. Besides, Animosities rising on one side and the other, whilst each becomes obstinate, to make his own words good; besides again, affected subtilties and arts to disguise the Truth, and make it seem another thing than really it ~~is~~, besides breaking the rules and formes of true Disputation, whereof the Auditory may be either ignorant or incapable, as being used to large discourses and Preaching, and not to the hedged Lanes of School-exercise; besides all incidencies which cannot be so easily guest at, as they happen in practise. But let the Disputation be settled; what shall the Arguments be? If out of Scripture either the enforcing of the Grammatical sense of some word, which since the Scripture is not written dogmatically, is a kind of forceing it, and for the most part a wrything it from the natural meaning: Or it is some sentence tor'n from the context of  
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what goes before or after, specially out of some mystical Book, as the Apocalips: or some little story, the circumstances whereof are not known: In all which, it is evident, there is fair scope of prating and jangling; but small, or no hope of arriving at Truth. If the Argument be out of the Fathers and Antiquity, first they will be sure to chuse a point that either concerns little (as of the name of something, or some petty ceremony) or else is depending of other more plain points which are of set purpose avoided in the choice; and so it self remote, and gave less occasion to be declared. If the Papist be to dispute, then no Fathers be of Authority but those of the first three Centuries, whose pains was chiefly against Pagans; and so spake only, or chiefly of the Unity & Providence of God, &c. though if any other be to Dispute against them, then latter ages will serve. If reason be employed, it is out of the inmost part of Philosophy where of the Auditory certainly knows nothing, nor likely one, if not both the

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Disputants. For since the reformers found that babling amongst the Unlearned, had a greater force to be admired, then speaking Reason amongst the Learned, and that with far less pains: They had been Fools if they would have gone the farther way about, when quibbling and jeering would serve their turns. So supposing they found the School-learning uncertain & ever disputable. The profit they brought into the world, was from Logicians and Sophisters, to bring us down to be School-Boys and Construers of Terence: By which we see the Devils practise against our Fore-fathers to go on in his posterity. For as then, under pretence of Science, he brought Man-kind to palpable darkness and ignorance; so now his Seed promising the simpler sort of people to make them all Doctors, and that every one should see in Scripture the truth of Christian Religion, have in that part of the Church they could debauch, taken away even that use of wit and seeming-learning which they confessed to be in it, and left

left nothing but pure Boyes play, popping out words that have no more strength then the paper they are written in, nor any handle by which mans Understanding can catch hold. And those poor wretches who follow such Masters, are yet so foolish, as not to see that instead of a Church which delivered them by an Universal Voyce, what it self could not be ignorant of, that it had received from their Fathers, and by them from Christ, they now rely upon one or two ignorant Grammarians, whose skill lyes only in words which have more variability of sense, than changeable Taffaty hath of colour; and no more substance than dry leaves: Yet, though they see that upon every turn they look after their Doctor, nevertheless perswade themselves that they themselves see all, and are the only Iudges, and Masters or Mistresses of their Opinions; and all this, because their Masters tell them they do so.

Though much more might, and peradventure were well to have been said;



said; yet my pretence of setting the skill of Logick, as proper to Controversies, under a short view, obliges me to forbear so full and ample a discourse. But because it is one of the maine Pillars of Pretenders to Reformation, to mis-represent those whom they pretend to reform: I could not omit to set down the *principal points of Doctrines controverted, as the Catholick Church maintaineth them*: That the Reader, desirous of Truth and Peace, may see what a Reformer is to oppose, if he intend to proceed honestly and uprightly. Against which, I scarce believe any prudent person will think fit to make an objection, unless out of Natural Reason; where the mystery is difficult, not for it self, but because we understand not Nature. As, he who is perfectly Master of Logick, will have little difficulty in accepting the Doctrine of the *Trinity*: He that thoroughly understands the composition of body & soul in man, will easily admit the *Incarnation*: And, who fully comprehends how living Creatures feed them-

themselves, will not stick at the mystery of the *Eucharist*. I pretend not to put down all: for, as there is no *all* of those demonstrations which may be made of the Natures of a Triangle or Circle; so, far less of the dependencies on the mysteries of our Faith, which the opposition of Adversaries may make necessary to be known and profess'd. I, therefore, content myself with those I apprehend the more troublesomely controverted in these our days.

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*A brief Explication of Ca-  
tholick Faith, in order to  
Modern Controversies.*

**V**<sup>V</sup> E-believe, That from all  
Eternity, there was a  
*Thing*, not made by any  
other, but having its being from it  
self. That, this *Thing* is unchang-  
able and immortal; having neither  
parts nor composition, and so is per-  
fectly Indivisible and Spiritual. That  
this same *Thing* is substantially and  
essentially *Knowing* and *Loving* it self:  
and so is a substance *known*, a substance  
*knowing*, and a substance *loving* the  
Thing known. That, as a Thing  
*known*, it is from which the Thing  
*knowing* is: and, as a Thing *known* and  
*knowing*, it is from which the substance  
or Thing *loving* is.

I That,

That, as a substance knowing or *knowledg*, we well explicate it by a name taken out of our natural considerations, that is, by the word *Son*: Likewise, as a substance *known*, by the word *Father*: but, as a substance *Love*, we cannot properly express it by either of these, and therefore we use the common name of *Holy-Ghost*, or *Spirit*, or *Breath*; to signify it is the beginning of outward action. And this is that which we mean, when we say, there are in God *THREE PERSONS, FATHER, SON, and HOLT-GHOST.*

This eternal indivisible Thing we call *God*; and profess that He made Time, and, in, or with the beginning of Time, all other things, whether spiritual and indivisible, or bodily and subject to corruption or mortality. Among the rest, and for the principal of those Creatures, which we know by our sense and conversation, he made *Man*; that is, *One Man*, and *One Woman*. He created them such, that they should not, by any Corruption, be extinguisht like the other  
Crea-

Creatures set round about them : but, remain after this life a spiritual Thing, capable of the sight of himself and eternal happiness.

These two were at, at first, created in such a state, that *Reason* was in them more powerful than sense, and could with ease have kept them from all actions unreasonable, and the unhappy effects of them : had not the envy of another intellectual Creature ( which we call the *Devil* ) seduc'd the Woman; and, by her means, the man also to eat of *Fruits*, of which they were forwarn'd that they would bring them Death and Misery.

By this means, disorder being brought into our first Parents, both in body and soul, all their Progeny became vitious, every Child drawing from his Ancestors disorderly inclinations, which avert him from the love and care of true bliss; and which, being strengthened by custom and opinion, were able to carry the whole Mass of Man-kind to eternal infelicity, the just and deserved punishment of this first default, and its evil consequents.

This slavery of Man - kind to sin, was so general, and their inclination to Vice so strong, that it exacted God Almighty should let great Rains destroy them all; Reserving, by his mercy, only eight persons to people the World a-new; making the world it self much less distractive and fuller of miseries: And, after a while again he saw it fit to pitch upon one Man and his Posterity, by Laws and special Government to conserve in them, though but weakly, the seeds of Vertue; often strengthening them by extraordinary means, and increasing their knowledg, though Vertue much faded in them. This People he govern'd, first, in the way of Republick, afterwards in that of Royalty, and lastly by Priests; till, notwithstanding all his care, and their science, they were grown to an extremity of perverseness.

Then He came to the last remedy, and taking, or, as it were, grafting into his own substance the Nature of Man, became in his own Person the Teacher and Example to Man-kind of  
all

all Vertuous action and good life. And, because Mans Nature was grafted by its noblest part, that is, by his *Mens* or root of Understanding; to which God, as a substance *Knowledge*, has, as it were, proportion: 'tis rightly deliver'd to us that the *Son* of God, or Second Person of the Godhead, took Flesh upon him to be our guide and rule; and not the *Father*, or *H. Ghost*, though they both are inseparably in him.

So God, who, by his Ministers, had instructed hitherto Man-kind by Allegories and Similitudes, proportionable to their carnal imbecility: Now, in his own Person, rendred Authoritative by Miracles, he opened the way to Heav'n, in as plain terms as our Nature is capable of; teaching us to abstract our selves from the love of Creatures, and adhere to him by love of the future blifs of our souls. Having compleated the course of his teaching by word and example, and shew'd us how to bear patiently and without fear, the miseries of this world, ev'n Death it self; he thought

good to give us a scantling of our bliss of body ; being rais'd the third Day, and for the space of forty days, shewing us a new Nature , which our bodies were to obtain in the last Resurrection, if so we deserv'd it.

During his abode upon Earth among us, he chose certain Believers, call'd *Apostles*, and, under them, a set number of *Disciples* : gave them Authority to Preach and practic'd them in it, ev'n whilst he liv'd ; but , instructed them more specially, towards his departure, how they should behave themselves in Conversion of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, & how they should govern the Nations they brought into his belief. When he had perform'd thus far, he left them, ascending, in their sight, above the Clouds ; and according to his promise , after ten days, by means of a miraculous wind , he replenisht them so with Faith and Charity ; that he made them fit Executors of his commands, and instruments of building the *Church* he intended to spread over all Nations. He gave them fervour of heart



Heart, and knowledg of Tongues; and power of Miracles; and discretion to use all, to the end for which he design'd them.

This *Church* being to consist of all Man-kind, as one Politick Body; he thought to set Universal rules of certain external actions and practices common to all, by, and in which they should communicate together, and know one another. And the main scope of his instruction being to bring men to the Honour and Service of God; he made likewise, for the principal of our external actions, One, to be a publick Testimony and Recognisance that God is the sole Authour of all good to us, and absolute Master of Life and Death, of *Being* and *Not-being*. Such a ceremony is call'd a *Sacrifice*.

This he did immediately before his Death, taking into his hands *Bread* and *Wine*, and blessing them; assuring us the Thing he gave was that very *Body* which should be wounded, and that very *Blood* which should be shed for us: And, so, against all prejudice

of sense, we believe the *substances* of Bread and Wine were changed really into the *substance* of his Body and Blood; notwithstanding, the *Natures*, that is, all the operations and resemblances of Bread and Wine remain as before.

This he commanded his Apostles to do, and, by Mediation of this Sacrifice, or Obtestation, or highest Prayer, to obtain for the Quick and Dead whatever is fit to be impetrated for them. He commanded also that, doing this, we should remember, or rather commemorate, that is, offer to the Churches remembrance, his Death and Passion. For, as it is a true Sacrifice, by the real and local parting of his Body and Blood; so, this, being done under the shapes of Bread and Wine, becomes a Figure and Allegory of the real and bloody separation made upon the Holy Cross. This *Sacrifice*, perform'd with convenient Ceremonyes, we usually call *The Mass*.

This Incorporation of all Christians into the Body of Christ, by participation

tion of this Sacrifice, is the highest Motive of Love to Christ, and to one another, that can fall into Mans heart; and therefore has ever been a Symbol or token of Peace among Christians, and is esteem'd the Myſtery or Sacrament of *Charity*. But because Christian Life consists of seven Vertues, three Theological, and four Cardinal; Christ deliver'd other six Sanctifications or Initiations, to enter us in the other six Vertues: *Baptism* for Faith; *Confirmation* for Hope; *Penance* to redress the wrongs we do to God and our Neighbours; *Matrimony* and *Extream Unction*, to inure us to Temperance, and fortifie us against the terrors of Death.

*Prudence*, because it eminently belongs to Commanders, receiv'd its proper initiation in the installment of Spiritual *Governors*, Priests and Bishops: who, being more eminent in Science and Charity, have power to govern the Flock of Christ. Among whom that emulation might not break Unity, by his own practice and mouth, Christ gave the Primacy to

*Peter*; to whose See and Successour inferiour Bishops were to have recourse in all publick necessities or dissensions of the Church; and who, at this day, is commonly call'd the *Pope*.

The first Bishops and Priests, that is, the Apostles and Disciples left certain Writings; but, neither by command nor design to deliver, in any or all of them, a Summary of our Faith, but occasionally teaching what they thought requisite for some certain place or Company: Which the *H. Ghost* intended for the comfort of the Church. In which, as we profess there is nothing false, or uncertain; so we know that the Unwritten Preaching ought to be the rule of their Interpretation, at least, negatively. Neither can we vindicate those Books from the corruptions of Transcribers, and much less of Interpreters; whose labours cannot pretend to the Authority of Scripture, otherwise then by a known conformity to the Originals.

'Tis incredible how great increase of Devotion and Charity accrues to  
Chri-

Christian People, by the Reverend Administration and Faithful Reception of these Sacraments : What respect and awe towards their Teachers, what adhesion to their Doctrine, and obedience to their directions : in fine, how great a life to the Church, and eminence above such Synagogues as are destitute of these holy Institutions.

The Apostles, therefore, arm'd with these and the afore-said powers, dispers'd themselves into all the quarters of the Earth ; planting this common Doctrine and Practice through the Universe : and, dying, left the Inheritance of the same to their Successors ; who, in debates about Doctrines and other dissensions, meeting together, and finding what the Apostles had left to the Churches, cast out such as would not conform to the receiv'd *Tradition*, and so Christians were divided ; the Parties cast out, being denominated by their Masters or particular Doctrines ; the part adhering to the Apostles Tradition, retaining the name of the *Apostolick Church*,

*Church*, which, because it was (especially at the first rise of any Sect), as it were, the whole of Christians, was also termed *Catholick* or *Universal*.

So *Tradition*, became the rule of Faith, and Councils, and Apostolical Sees the infallible Depositories of it; and, the rest sayling, either by the destruction of Christian Religion in those quarters, or by the voluntary discession from the rule of Faith; the *Roman See*, first instructed by the two chief Apostles, and afterwards by perpetual correspondence with all Christian Countries, and their recourse to it in matters of Faith and Discipline, remain'd the only single Church which was able, in Vertue of perpetual Succession, to testifie what was the Apostles Doctrine. Afterwards, Hereticks equivocally confounding the names of *Apostolick* and *Catholick*, by an Impudence of saying what they list without shew of reason: The *Catholick* party has been forc'd, for distinction, to add to their Church the Surname of *Roman*; declaring hereby, that the *Roman* particular Church

is,

is the Head and Mistress, and cause of Unity to all those Churches that have share in the *Catholick*.

By this link of Truth, viz. receiving Doctrine by Succession; and the link of Unity, in the Roman Head of the Church, as the Church has hitherto stood in Persecutions, Heresies and Schisms: So we are assured it will never fail, till the second coming of our Lord; but hope it will encrease into an Universal Kingdom of *Christ*, to continue an unknown extent of Ages (design'd in the *Apocalyps* by the number of a thousand years) in great prosperity and freedom from either Pagans without, or Hereticks within, and in great abundance of Charity and good life.

This being the apparent effect of Christ's coming, we see that the general good Life of Man-kind, (which proceeds from the knowledg of the End, to which we are created, and other motives and means deliver'd us by Christ's Doctrine,) was the great and only design for which he came; that is, to be the cause to us of an happy

happy life, both in this World, and in the next. And, this being the main advantage of the State of Paradise; or, of our Nature before corruption: 'Tis clear, Christ has *repaired* the fault of *Adam*, by making whole Man-kind capable of attaining everlasting bliss; which one only Family, before his coming, had generally means to arrive at.

The setting Man-kind in this repair, restor'd it to such a condition in respect of God Almighty, that he resolv'd to bestow his greatest benefits on it, that is, *Eternal Felicity*; whereas, before, (as long as it was in the state of sin) his degrees were for its Universal Damnation. By which, 'tis clear, that Christ *appeas'd* his Father's wrath, and made him a Friend of a Foe he had been before.

So that, because Eternal Bliss follows out of good Life, and the constant habit or inclination to it; as likewise Damnation, out of the state of a sinful inclination: Formal *Justification* consists in the habit of good Life, and the state of Damnation in  
an



an habitual inclination to Sin (neither the one, nor the other in an extrinsecal acceptation or refusal of the Divine Will, and its Arbitrary Election or dislike), which are only the efficient causes from whence they, proportionably to their Natures, depend.

Farther, because Man-kind was not able of it self to get out of the state of sin, and, by consequence, lay in subjection and slavery to it; and Christ, by the explicated means and actions, set it free, and gave it power to come out of that misery; he clearly *Redeem'd* Mankind from this servitude of Sin, and Sins Master, the Devil, and gave it the liberty in which it had been created at first: And, because *Christ* did this by his Death and penal actions of his Life, he is rightly said to have *paid a Ransom* for Man-kind.

Notwithstanding this general preparation of causes, by which all were inabled to well-doing; no particular man can arrive to any action of Vertue, without the special Providence and Benevolence of Almighty God:  
which,

which, by convenient circumstances, not only external, but also internal, reaching to the very effect it self, prepares our hearts to receive these common impressions, and makes them good Earth, fit for the Seed of our Eternal Cultiver, who, without any respect to former merits, plants Faith and Charity, and all that's good in us, meerly of his own benignity and graciousness.

Now, *Grace*, or the Divine spontaneous Providence operates all this, not by immediately determining the Man; but, by so sweetning the proposals, that they overcome the heart, and make it determine it self according to the Will of God. For, the Divine Power, ordinarily speaking, does nothing immediately by its self, nor has any influence by it self, into human actions, but all by the Mediation of the second causes. It only ordering and setting them on work; and if (as some Philosophers held) they could and did work of themselves, without being posited on by Him; just the very same things would happen as  
now.

now they do. So that, neither *Predestination* nor *Reprobation*, by being what they are purely in God, bring any change at all in our Wills determinations; and no mention of them ought to be made, farther then to shew Gods Wisdom and Goodness, who fore-saw and fore-will'd, and so caused (like an Universal, not a Particular cause) all our actions, as far as they are good.

Only, when something occurs, wherein 'tis fit the course of Material causes should be moderated and directed, above their own line, to the government of Man-kind: There, the Almighty Goodness has other Instruments to perform his Will. These we call *Angels*, incorporeal and spiritual Substances; which, being Created with the beginning of Time, but not subjected to it, were, independently of it, perfected for their own Bliss or Misery: Those, who envy'd Mans felicity, in that his Nature should be elevated to become God, remaining in the darkness and torments which extremity of Willfulness causes.

causes in such Natures beyond all we can imagine; the purer part, by adherence to Gods disposition, becoming participant of his sight with an unconceivable joy and happiness.

These, under his Divine Majesty, govern humane actions and their Negotiation for Heav'n: The Blessed party being ready to furnish us with all goods, as far as the course of Providence requires and permits; the Bad being prompt to inflict all harms of Soul and Body, when ever the hand of Providence holds not the reins. This, every sort does in common and particular, when the ordinary course is to be inverted, for the sweeter bringing of Man-kind to the intended Bliss; and such of them as are specially intent to particular persons are us'd to be call'd their *Angels Guardians*, if they be good; Devils or Accusers, if they be wicked Spirits.

By these ways and Instruments Christ planted his Church and governs it, and will conserve it as long as this World (which was made for it)

it) shall continue : Keeping it free from Errour, and in the quality of a Teacher, a Commander, and a visible Tribunal, to which all may repair who seek to Salvation. But, when the fore-designed work is finisht, and the number of our Brethren filled; then the World shall be consumed by Fire: Man-kind rise and appear before *Christ*, their Judg; receive their Eternal Doom; and all Time and Motion be ended and turn'd into a constant state for ever. The Good shall receive the full Reward of their Vertue, as yet but inchoated in their Souls: Which, if they went out perfect in Charity, enjoy'd immediately the sight of God; and assist us, now, by their Prayers as they did, living, by their Merits; that is, their good Example, and profitable labours for their Posterity: And so we invoke them, and desire God that both their prayers and merits may be beneficial to us.

And because we account them Persons highly worthy, and in the favour of God; we therefore testifie so much  
by

by keeping some of their dying days holy, for encouragement of others to imitate them; and bear a respect to their Relicks, such as we do to holy Instruments, as, the Bible, Chalices, Consecrated Oyls, and the like: And, as we Kiss the Hand of a Prince, or Garment of a Prelate, intending it as a Ceremony of Honour to him; so we Kiss the Relicks or Pictures of Saints, and especially Crosses which we take for the Pictures of Christ Crucified, making such Action the Ceremony of expressing honour to the person represented. This, in the Greek and Latine, is call'd *Adoration*, that is, *Kissing*; that being the most antient and natural Ceremony of Protesting a Loving Honour; and, the word reaching, in a divers sence, to the thing immediately toucht, and to that person to whom the Honour is refer'd; 'tis said, they both are *adored* by the same act of Adoration, but the one materially and corporally, the other with the heart and mind; we submitting our selves to the one as to our better, and making the other

other the means by which we express it.

The absolutely wicked, confuted and terrify'd by the sight of their Judg, will be confin'd to perpetual darkness of spirit, and gnawing of their Conscience, and the anguishes of their raging desires, for all Eternity.

The middle sort, *viz.* Those who, according to the usual defectibility of all corporeal and mortal goods, decrease substantially in Charity and Love of God, but not without some weakneses and defects; cannot, before they are purg'd, be admitted to the sight of God: and so, expect, in darkness and grief, that happy change; to which the Prayers of the Living, as also of the Saints in Heaven, do much avail them.

These are the chief Heads of the Christian profession of that Church, which, being in Communion with the Church of *Rome*, pretends to have receiv'd her Doctrine from *Christ* and his Apostles, in a perpetual publick exercise and profession, without interruption, handed down to this our pre-

present Age; and out of which have issu'd all particular *Congregations*, who, in their several seasons, separating themselves from her, have been denominated by several appellations; the name *Catholick* ever remaining to her, in spite of all invasions.

By which it appears that the oppositions made against her are only the breaking down all Christianity and good Life, either in its self, or in its out-works. As, the *Socinians*, denying the God-head of the *B. Trinity*, and of *Christ Jesus*: The *Pelagian*, by denying the Fall of Man, and the necessity and efficacy of Grace: the *Puritans* or *Presbyterians*, by denying the necessity of good Life to Justification, destroy the very essence of Christianity and Vertue. Divers, by denying the solemn and holy Sacrifice of the Altar, the highest act of our Religious duty to God, and cutting off most of the Sacraments; by rejecting Prayers to the Saints and Angels, and all devotion for the Dead; by abolishing Holy-days and publick Fasts; by pulling down the Pictures



of Christ and his Saints, which our pious Ancestors set up to renew the memory of their Examples, and encourage us to follow them, demolish the Fences and Butworks of the same Christianity and good Life. But all that deserve the name of *Hereticks*, agree to charge the Church of *Christ* with Corruption and Adultery; and deny in her both infallibility to know Christs Doctrine and power to govern; and consequently destroy external Unity, and the Essence of it: Which, as it is not formally to ruine good Life, so, it is more than to break down her Out-works; since it intrenches upon the very substance in common, and leaves no means but hap hazard to come to the knowledg of Christs Law and Eternal Salvation. Hence we may understand what this name *Popery* signifies, viz. The Affection or Resolution to maintain Faith and good Life, and the causes of the conservation of them.

There are divers others point controverted betwixt Catholicks and Sectaries; but such, for the most part,

part, as need no explication but a pure denial. As, when they accuse us to have depriv'd the Laity of half the Communion; we deny it: For, Besides that, the general practice of Christians has been from the beginning to give the Sacraments sometimes in one kind, sometimes in both; the Church has always believ'd the entire Communion was perfectly Administered in either. We deny, likewise, that ever the Church held the necessity of communicating Infants, or the Popes personal *Infallibility*: That Indulgences can draw Souls out of *Purgatory*: That Prayers ought to be made in an unknown Tongue, though we may think it fitting in some Circumstances, that the publick Service, for Reverence and Majesty, may be so performed. That Faith is not to be kept with Infidels: That the Pope can dispense with the Legitimate Subjection to Princes; and twenty such other *Tenets*; which are injuriously impos'd by Sectaries, and flatly deny'd by us, and therefore require no farther explication.

*Appendix.*

# APPENDIX.

**C**ontroversy-Logick, or the Art of Discourſing in matter of Religion, between thoſe who profeſs the Law of Chriſt, cannot be compleat; unleſs, as *Ariſtotle* made a Book of *Fallacies*, to avoid cavils in his *Organon*, or Inſtrument of Science, ſo we alſo diſcover the common fallacies uſed in *Controversies*: Not all, but the chiefest and moſt ordinary. To this purpoſe I firſt note, that our Ancients have taught us, and by experience we daily find, that *Hereſie* is, in a manner, as ſoon overthrowen as laid open; falſhood like deformity being aſhamed of nakedneſs. Its way therefore is to veſt it ſelf, like an Angel of Light in the ſkin of the Lamb, and ſeem to wear the Robes of Truth; I mean, by words like thoſe of the Catholick

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party,

party, to delude the simplicity of the Innocent and well-meaning People; which Charity obliges us to prevent by clearing the Protestants--

## APPENDIX

### Shuffles,

#### 1. Of the Word Scripture.

**A**ND, first, If we ask them what they rely on, they braggingly answer, on *Gods Word*; upbraiding Catholicks with relying on men, when they fly to the Churches witness: But if we press them to declare what they mean by *Gods Word*, whether the Book of the *Bible*, or the sense of it; they are forced to answer, *the sense*; for, 'tis evident we have the Book as well as they. Strain them at next step, to shew by what instruments or means they know the sense, they cannot but confess 'tis by reading, & their own studying,

or

or thinking the sense of the Scripture is that which they affirm ; though Catholicks all affirm the contrary. And although even in this they are censured, following, for the most part, the explication of their Preacher ; yet I press not that, for they know not that they do so : But only urge this Reflexion, when you say you rely on Scripture or Gods Word ; observe, your meaning is, that you rely on your own opinion, or guess that *this* is Gods Word. So that this glorious profession of relying on Gods Word is, in substance and reality, to rely on the opinion or guessing of a Coffer, or Tinker, or some House-wife ; when the answerers are such : or, at most, of a Minister ; who, for his own interest, is bound to maintain this is the meaning of Gods word.

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2. Of General Councils.

SOME Protestants are so bold, as to profess they will stand to General Councils. Now, a *General Council*, in the language of Catholics, is a general meeting of the Christian World, by its Bishops and Deputies, to testify the Doctrine of the Christian Church: And 'tis accounted inerrable in such testifications; and therefore to have power to command the faith of Christians, and cast out of the Church all that yield not to such their determinations and agreements; and, by consequence, to have a *supreme Authority* in the Church, in matters of Faith. The Protestants, loath to leave the shadow, though they care not for the substance, use the name, but to no effect. For, the intention being to manifest the Doctrine of the Christian World,  
and

and consequently, that number and quality of Witnesses suffizing as evidence, that they first, agree not upon the notion of what a *Council* is, requiring sometimes that all Bishops should be present, sometimes that all Patriarks, though known to be profess'd Hereticks, and under the Turk, sometimes objecting want of liberty, and mainly, that they decide not by disputation out of Scripture alone, or that they taught false Doctrine. So that to the Protestant a *Council* signifies an indefinite and uncertain meeting of men, going upon Scripture; Which (as is before declared) signifies every Ministers or Trades-mans fancy that hath no Authority to bind men to believe, and is to be judg'd by the Doctrine or agreement in Faith with the Protestants.

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### 3. Of the consent of Fathers.

**T**He consent of the Fathers, or Doctors of Christians before our Age and Controversies, bears so Venerable an aspect; as that few Hereticks dare (at least, before honest understanding Christians) give it flatly the lye. Therefore the discreeter part of Protestants acknowledge it; yet with a *Salvo* that they were all men and might be deceived; which in effect is to say, that it is no convincing or binding Authority, as Catholicks hold it to be; nay, to be a stronger Authority then that of a Council, as being the judgment, in several Ages, of the Catholick Church, or the learned part of it, which is all one as to Faith. The Protestant first, at one clap cuts off a thousand or 13. hundred years, nay some 15. hundred. Some saying S. Gregory the Great was the



the last Father and first Papist; the more ordinary course being to acknowledge only the Fathers of the Persecution-time before *Constantine*, finding Popery (as they call it) too publick afterwards; some pressing that, ever since the decease of the Apostles, the Church has been corrupted: So that, they neither give any Authority to the consent of Fathers, nor acknowledge the thing Catholicks call the Fathers, accepting, commonly, no considerable part of them, and the larger opinion nothing neer the half. The consent of the Fathers, therefore in the sense of Protestants, signifies nothing but the opinion of some few, who have written either nothing, or little and obscurely, of the points in Controversy.

#### 4. Of this Word Catholick- Church.

**T**O the *Catholick-Church* all plead a Title, the *Apostles Creed* forcing them to the name. And *Catholicks*, by this word, understand a Church which hath endured from Father to Son, from Christs time to ours, still teaching the same Doctrine, and living under an outward visible government; the head whereof is in the Church of *Rome*, viz. the Pope. And so, they acknowledg and obey a visible and determinate Authority, to which recourse for Doctrine may every moment be had, by looking into their general Practice and publick Catechisms (as that made by order of the Council of *Trent*) and in great occasions to General meetings; and mean while to the particular Church  
of

of Rome. But the Protestant, by this name, pretends to a Church compos'd of all whom he accounts good Christians; which has no other Rule than of the *Scripture*, that is, the fancy of every particular Congregation, for its opinions; no common Government; no bounds or limits to be known by, but such as every private judgment shall, upon occasion, set to include or exclude whom he pleases. So that plainly, what Protestants mean by the name of the *Catholic Church*, is no determinate Congregation of men, nor can have any influence to govern either Faith or Manners.

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### 5. Of consent with the Greek Church.

Some Protestants highly brag of their Communion with the Greek Church; or rather of their

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consent in Doctrine with it ( for, I have not heard of any Communion, unless with the Patriarch Cyril, who for that cause was put out, as an Heretick ): a matter, though of no consequence now, yet, for the name of what it has been anciently, of a colourable credit to them. Let us therefore see what the Protestant means, by this communion or consent. Two points there are ( and only two of moment ) wherein the Greek and Latin Church differ: One, about the *Procession of the Holy Ghost*, in which the 39. Articles men agree with the Latine Church against the Græcians; and yet these are they who most pretend to the Greek Union: The other, about *Obedience to the Pope*; as to which, the Greeks freely acknowledg in Him a *Primacy*, and confess he were to be obeyed in just commands; excepting only against his oppression ( as they call it ) and clayming more then his right; but Protestants utterly deny him any Right. So that this glorious consent they boast of, is not in Doctrine or Sacraments, the Use of Chri-

Christians; but at best by halves, in a case of Schism and disobedience, which is common to all Hereticks.

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### 6. Of the Roman Church.

SOME of them being ashamed of their own Orphanage, and that they cannot name their Father or Mother, will (in spite of the Roman Church and her defying them) intitle themselves her off-spring; saying, she is substantially a true Church, though she couches insufferable errors in her faith, which force them not to communicate with her. Let us therefore see what these mean, by this Word the *Roman Church*. Catholics mean by it, a Congregation of men, joyn'd with *Rome* in an Obligation of Government, for the maintaining Faith, Sacraments, and Good Life; taking this Obligation to be that which makes the men, bound together by it, a Church. The Protestant

testant takes this obligation to be an insufferable Tyranny; will have no Rule of Faith, but such as he can turn which way he thinks best for his interest or fancy; Sacraments and Government no other, then what he cannot avoid out of his proposed rule of Faith, or at most, without the shame of the World. So that he means nothing that belongs to the making a multitude of men a *Church*; but only, the multitude of men, of which a Church may be made; as if a man should call a House or Palace, the ruins of one lying in a heap where it was fallen.

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## 7. Of the Word Mission,

**B**EYOND these generally the Prelatick party pretend to derive themselves by *Mission* from the Roman Church. Let us see, then, what they intend by this word: *Mission*. The Catholick interpretation is, that

*Mission*.

*Mission* signifies a Command given to the party sent, to deliver a Message to them to whom he is sent ; which makes the Apostles question good ; *How can they Preach if they are not sent ?* That is, if no body deliver them an Errand to carry : And God is said to put his own Words, in the Mouths of those he sends ; and Christ, when he sent his Apostles, bad them Preach, or deliver to the world, what he had taught them. Now, because this command, or commission, is delegated in the Catholick Church, by a certain ceremony which is called *Ordination*, or the *Sacrament of Order* : The Protestant grew ambitious of this outside, and so pretends his first Prelates had an Ordination from the Catholick Bishops, whom they had deposed, or at least violently cast out from their Sees ; and this they call to have a *Mission* from the Roman Church. So that they do not so much as pretend to the substance of the thing called truly *Mission* ; but to an outside and shadow, good enough to serve their

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turns, who love the Glory of men and regard not Gods truth.

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### 8. Of being like to the Primitive Church,

**A**Nother thing wherein they insult over Catholicks, is *Antiquity*; which, because it hath a venerable awfulness in it self, they (specially the *Presbyterian* party) much presume on; professing their Church to be more like the Ancient Christian Church, then the Catholicks is; asking whether *S. Peter* were the Prince of *Rome*, Bishops in such great Pomp, had such Courts, Altars, Churches, Pictures, in such abundance, and so richly attired, Ceremonies and Sacraments performed with so great magnificence and Order? By which we see, wherein these men place the Antiquity they pretend to, so that the Church had not those means to draw



draw weak hearts, which need the helps of bodily appearances to raise themselves to the conceit of invisible goods: Whereas the Catholick pretends to Antiquity, and to be like the Primitive times, in the substantial means of Christian life; as, in Church-Government and power of Bishops, their accommodating the quarrels of the faithful by the order of the Apostles, performing the Mass, Baptism, Ordination, and other Sacraments, with exactness and diligence; in Reliques, Holy Burials, having Feasts, Fasts, Penitential Canons, flocks of People of both Sexes dedicated to God, Religious Ceremonies, and all sorts of enticements to love Heaven and follow good life. So that the Antiquity the Protestant pretends to is, wanting Wilfully those means of helping souls, which the Primitive Church wanted by the Violence of Persecution; and the Antiquity meant by Catholicks is, being like the Ancient Church in all things that promote ~~virtue~~ <sup>virtue</sup> inwardly and outwardly.

## 9. Of the Word Tradition:

**T**O *Antiquity* hangs *Tradition*, that is, the *Receiving* of Doctrine and Customs from the Ancient Church; which Catholicks place in this, that they are derived from the Apostles to us, by the continual and immediate delivery of one Age to another; the Sons continuing their Fathers both belief and conversation in Christian life, and treading the same paths of Salvation. This was a bit of too sower a digestion for Protestants; being not able to shew any Masters from whom they had received their belief. Yet a Tradition they must have, not to be openly convinced of having forged their Doctrine. Some of them therefore said they received their doctrine by the Tradition of the Bible to them, by the Churches continuing ever since the Apostles time, where in you see an open

open equivocati g, in the word *Tradition*; Catholicks taking it for the delivery of Doctrine; that is, of sense and meaning; Protestants for the delivery of a mute Book or killing Letter. Others call *Tradition* the Testimony of the Fathers of all Ages; and so at least divert the Question; turning the proof of Religion (which ought to be, and is plain and easie to every ordinary understanding) into a business of learning and long study; in which, though they be worried, yet the People cannot see it, nor descry their fallhood.

## 10. Of the word Really.

**T**O descend from the Universality or defence of their whole Religion, to special Articles of it; we shall find them there like themselves. As for example, those who bear outward respect to the *Fathers*, finding them concurring so thick,

to testifie Christs Body to be in the H. Eucharist, will seem to say the same, and apply the words *Really*, and *verily*, and *truly*, to Christs being in the Sacrament; averring they only question the manner how he is there; which is lawful even among Catholicks. So that you can scarce distinguish them from Catholicks; till you come to explication. When, the Catholick says, that Christs Body is in the Sacrament, as the substance of Bread was in the thing which before we call'd Bread, and now is no more; but turn'd into that body which was hang'd on the Cross, by an entitative and real mutation. The Protestant will tell you, that it is still Bread, and naturally and entitatively the same thing it was before consecration; but that by Faith (which is a real action) it is Christs true Body to us. How to justify these words, that by Faith it is Christs true Body, is impossible; unless they will have us believe by Faith, what they tell us is false. Therefore others say, it is an assurance of Christs Body, as a Bond is of money:

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Peradventure, of enjoying Christ in Heaven: But, how different both senses are from the Catholick, which they would should be thought theirs, and from the natural meaning of the words, every man can see. So that the manner of being<sup>s</sup> Christs Body, which they question, signifies whether it be truly there or no, otherwise then by a false apprehension, they call *Faith*.

## II. Of the word *Sacrifice*:

**T**He like is of the words *Sacrifice*, and *Altar*, and such other. In which the Catholick position makes these words proper; and that the Mass is as, or more, properly signified by the word *Sacrifice*, as the Sacrifice of the *Old Law*. That there is a true and real separation of the Body of our Saviour from his Blood, and more proper to the names, then Nature can make; for Nature cannot make

make a true body when the blood is separated, nor true blood when the body is left out; which in this Sacrament is performed, and nevertheless Christ entire and untouched. But, a Protestant will tell you that, when the Holy offering is call'd a Sacrifice, 'tis meant a Sacrifice of praise or thanksgiving; that is, in reality, no Sacrifice, but an outward ceremony of praise or thanksgiving: Others, that it is a resemblance or representation of a Sacrifice, viz. of that of the M. Cross, so that you see the difference of the two significations is no less, then when by the same word, *Christ*, one means Christs Person, another, a Crucifix or the picture of Christ.

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## 12. Of the word Priesthood.

**I**N consequence and conformity to this, they abuse the word *Priesthood*. For reading all Antiquity gloriously full of this name, they must also use it. But finding St. *Paul* had too expressly taught us, that a Priest was a publick Officer, ordain'd to offer to God Gifts and Sacrifices, and that he ought to be legitimately call'd to the office; and that Catholics take Priesthood in this sence: And on the other side, how themselves had taken out of the Church all solemn Offerings and Sacrifice, the business of a Priest; nevertheless shame on one side, and ambition on the other, egg'd them on to call themselves *Priests*; they were forced to corrupt the Word *Sacrifice*, first, as is declared, to come to the name *Priesthood*. So that *Priest*, in the Protestant meaning, is an Officer chosen to sing Psalms

Psalms in the sight of the People: Which, how different it is from the Catholick explication, of being the publick Officer of the eternal Sacrifice, is too plain to be declared.

### 13. Of the word Faith.

**T**HE abuse of this name *Faith*, must not be omitted. This Catholics take for a persuasion of such truths, as are necessary to bring us to good life and salvation; which persuasion we settle upon Christs Doctrine, delivered to us by *Tradition* of the Church; a meaning clear in the Apostle, who expresses himself to speak of Faith that works by Charity. Now, the first Protestants took the word *Faith*, as excluding Charity, and cry'd down good works as unprofitable: The later, ashamed of this, as destroying good life, and plainly contrary to the whole design of Scripture and Fathers, took it for  
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the same Faith that Catholicks do; but would have it have force precisely out of its being a persuasion, and the working follow to no effect, but as a hangen on, without any End; whereas Catholicks make the persuasion to be chiefly or wholly to breed Charity, which is the true cause of salvation. But, the Presbyterian party, and the plainer dealing Protestants, have quite changed and destroyed Faith: saying, Faith is a Persuasion that the believer must have, that he in person is one of the Predestinate, and shall be saved by this persuasion, through the merits of Christ, without any regard to his works and life. Of which sense, seeing there is no revelation, there can be no relying upon the word of God for any such effect; and so 'tis clear, these people have nothing like Faith; the former Protestants having at least the Carcase, though they renounce the soul, life, and being of it.

# 14. Of the words Head of the Church.

**C**atholicks understand by *Head of the Church*, a succession of Persons deputed by Christ, & empower'd with Authority in Spiritual and Ecclesiastical things, to preserve Unity and true discipline among Christians. *Protestants* will have it, that we set the Pope above all that is call'd God, and that we make him Lord of our Faith, to command us to believe or unbelieve what he list; and under that notion, will dispute against him. And even the more moderate think themselves great Conquerors, when they have flourish'd a little against his personal infallibility, and power to depose Princes and the like points, which Catholicks deny as freely and strongly as they. Acknowledging only in him an universal su-  
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perintendency over the Church in *Spiritu-als*; and, for *Temporals*, they are so far from believing him sole and arbitrary Disposer of Crowns, that they believe all his, and all Church-mens coercive civil power (where themselves are not temporal Princes) is wholly derived from the civil Magistrates; though, when the Laws of any Nation have Establish'd on Church-men any temporal Authority, 'tis free for them to exercise it as well as for others.

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### 15. Of Fundamentals and not Fundamentals.

**T**HIS is a distinction devised by Protestants to stop certain gaps with, that else would let in upon them several dangerous Arguments. As when Catholics say, the *Scripture* alone is not a sufficient rule of Faith, by reason of its frequent obscurity. They answer, 'tis clear as the Sun in all

*Fundamentals*: An answer not only untrue (if we believe the 2 *Pet.* 3. 16. where the *Unlearned* and *Unstable* are said to *pervert the Scripture to their own Perdition*: Whence I Argue, either the *Texts* reflected on by St *Peter*, contain fundamentals or not; if they do, then plainly the *Scriptures* are hard to understand in *Fundamentals*; if not, then a man may be damn'd for erring in a point not *Fundamental*: Nor does the *Apostle* speak of factious and malicious *Interpreters*, but of *Unlearned* and *Unstable*; which two words comprehend many an honest Man, and almost all Women in the World: But, which we now must accuse it of, 'tis a meer shift, till they tell us which are *Fundamentals*; a task that hitherto I do not know, they have so much as undertaken.

Again, when we charge them with their great and many disagreements in Faith among themselves, they presently reply, all of the *Reformation* agree in *Fundamentals*. Which, besides its incoherence with their *Doctrine*,

Doctrine, that where there are no Bishops, there's no Ordination; and where no Ordination, no Clergy, or Pastors; where no Pastors, no Flock, that is, no Church; and where no Church, they surely want some Fundamental: Besides this, 'tis as meer a shift in this case as in the former; till they either shew us their *Fundamentals*, or recommend us to some Authority that can assure us they agree in *Fundamentals*, though it cannot say which are the *Fundamentals*. The Scripture we have had long experience is not able to reconcile them; since so many hold that, and yet continue their differences both in faith and discipline.

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## 16. Of Necessary to Salvation.

**T**His Title has much affinity with the former, yet because 'tis by Protestants otherwise apply'd, it shall be by me distinctly treated. All that's necessary to Salvation say they, we will exactly teach and observe, but that without which a Man may be saved, we think indifferent to be done or omitted. By that Profession it appears, they consider the *Necessity of Salvation* with reference to Particulars, and, as it is usual to take our measures for others by experience of our selves, apprehend *That* absolutely unnecessary, without which they conceit they can do well enough themselves. In which they sometimes go so far as to condemn the rest as vain, and superstitious, especially if it be not expressly found in the Word of God, and

and if it come to be impos'd, deserving for that reason to be oppos'd. *Catholicks* in that expression look not upon Particulars, but the Community, and think a command may be necessary to Salvation, though some particulars may be saved without it, if it be needful to others. The different consequences of these two explanations are very important. If a man may be saved without keeping Fasting days, say some, what need he put himself to that unnecessary trouble? And so though Lent, and other Fasts are commanded both by Church and State, they are yet observed by few. And 'tis the same in several other points both of belief and practise. Now if such a liberty were extended to politick Laws, the disorder would be very great and very manifest. If a man should think it permittable, because he is poor, and would employ the money better, and also faithfully restore it after a while, to take his Neighbour's money, who is Rich, and needs not, and peradventure mispends, he would soon be convin-

ced by the inconvenience of the Common-wealth, that his speculation were very unreasonable.

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### 17. *Of the word Heretick.*

**I**N the common Language of Catholics, the word *Heretick* has always signified, One who refuses to believe some Doctrine which he knows is taught by the Church as a point of Faith. Protestants, seeing the danger, into which such a Notion would ingage them, have chang'd it into quite another thing, defining an Heretick to be One who refuses to believe some Fundamental point of Doctrine taught by the Scripture; and thus they reduce the crime of Heresie, so much detested by all Antiquity, to such a slippery description, that 'tis not only impossible to be proved, but even impossible to be committed. 'Tis but saying, the Doctrine



I hold is, in my judgment, the true sense of Gods Word; and if I err, 'tis no more than every man may do; and consequently, he has no more right to be my Judg, than I to be his: If he have power, he may punish me *as an Heretick*; and so may I do him, when I get the power: But, unless he have Authority, neither can he judg me, nor I him to *be an Heretick*.

Some, to avoyd this inconvenience, take a shorter way, and call him, and him only, an *Heretick*, who denyes some Article of the Apostles Creed. But whas will this fair plea avail, if any should affirm, that neither all, nor only Fundamentals, are contain'd in that Creed? since *Justification* by only Faith is a Fundamental, and not there; and Christs descent into Hell is there, and not a Fundamental,

## Conclusion.

**I**F we should thus run over all the points controverted between Catholics, and all that have separated themselves from the Catholick Church, we should find very few freely disputed; but that either they calumniate the Catholick position, or counterfeit it. As, concerning *Images and Saints*; they pretend we worship them as Gods: For *Marriage*, they report we disallow it: For the *Merits of Christ*, they say we rely not on them; because we understand them otherwise then they do. For, the Catholick Church understands, that Christ, by his life and passion, procured the Establishment of the H. Church; the Preaching of the Gospel over the whole Earth; A settled means to continue and encrease what he, by himself and his Apostles, begun; A seed and root of good life, planted by sending the H. Ghost to remain in the Church for ever; A Government of Bishops and Doctors for ever; Sacraments to be Universally administered;

And; Extraordinary Examples of Heroick vertues, in Martyrs, Confessours, Monks and Nuns; and, in a word, all that was necessary to bring the Universality of Man-kind to Heavenly blis; and these means to be deriv'd to single Persons, according to Gods all good providence, and the connatural suite of causes. The Protestant understands, that Christ, in his private prayer, spake to his Father, in particular for every one of the Predestinate, to save him, for his and his passions sake; and so infers, that the belief, that he is one of those for whom Christ specially pray'd, is that which must apply the grace granted by Christs eternal Father to his soul; and thinks the Catholick relies not upon Christs merits, because he doth it not so fillily as he does. In *Penance*, the Catholick holds it a Sacrament, in form of a judgment; in which the penitent is absolv'd or condemn'd, according to his desert: The Protestant holds only, as it were a complement, of ones acknowledging himself a sinner, and asking of mercy; and that the

the preacher without farther ceremony absolve him. Those who believe not the mysteries of the *Trinity* and *Incarnation*, nevertheless use the words of *One God* and *Three Persons*; and profess, that, though they hold the Son and H. Ghost to be Creatures, yet that they are to be called each of them God: And likewise, though some hold Christ to have no other Nature then of a Man, yet that he is justly called God, for his great perfections and Unity in Charity with God.

It were superfluous to multiply more examples to shew how it is not the zeal of the truth; but either Ignorance, in them who do not understand the true difference betwixt the Catholick Church and its deserters; or Malice, in them, who disguise either their own tenets, or those of the Catholick party. God prosper the labours of those who seek Unity, and by his sweet conduct, bring all who profess the name of Christ into perfect concord in one Flock, in Unity in Faith and Charity.

F I N I S.

